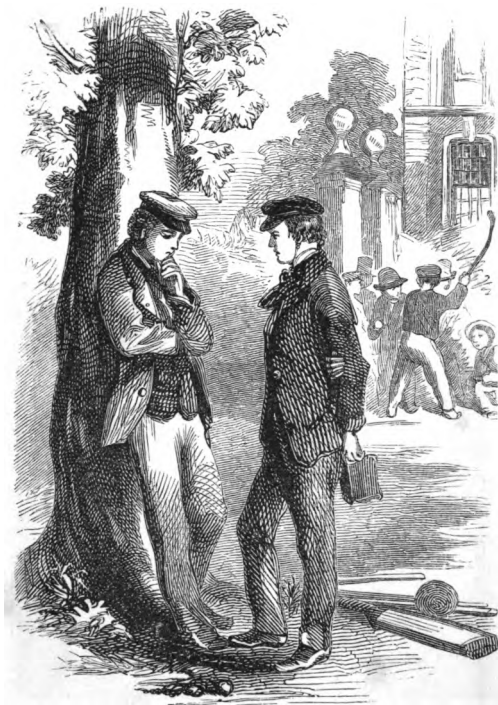


School Days Rev'wed.



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p. 8.

School Days Reviewed;

OR,

STORIES OF SCHOOLBOYS.



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SCHOOL DAYS REVIEWED.

I.

GOLD MAY BE BOUGHT TOO DEAR.

"BOTHER the Latin!" exclaimed George, throwing from him his book in a pet. "I cannot learn it, and I won't. I wish—"

"And I wish," said one of his schoolfellows, interrupting him, "that you would mind what you are about, George. You very nearly knocked the inkstand over with your book; and if you had spilled the ink on my exercise, I wonder who would have written it again?"

"George bothers the Latin, he says," remarked a demure boy on the opposite side of the desk; now I think it is the Latin that bothers him."

The boys laughed, and George laughed too; and with that laugh his momentary irritation left him. He put out his hand for the offending book, and—though with no great liking for the task—made another attempt at its translation.

This was an evening scene. The following morning presented the usual appearance of George at the bottom of the class, or very near it; his written translation blotted with many marks, and himself listening with impatience to the rebukes of his patient teacher.

“It will never do, George. This extreme carelessness of yours, this want of application, if not overcome, will be a plague and a drawback—yes, and a disgrace to you all the days of your life. Go to your desk, sir, and correct these egregious blunders; a mere tyro would be ashamed of them.”

George looked ashamed,—not of his carelessness, perhaps, but of being lectured, as he afterwards said;—and obeyed.

A few hours afterward, George and his (at that time) favourite companion were walking round and round the playground, over which their schoolfellows were scattered. The two boys were gravely talking.

“Well, if I were you—”

“You would be just what I am, and do just what I do.”

“If I were in your place then, George, I would pay more attention. What is the use of your being such an idle fellow as you say you are? These are your words and not mine, you know. I declare I was ashamed of you to-day, and so I am every day. Do exert yourself. You can if you will.”

"I tell you, Dick," replied George, with some appearance of vexation, "that I am naturally so idle that nothing *can* rouse me; and besides, if I could exert myself, as you wisely counsel me, what would be the good of it?"

"The good of it! Why, for one thing, you would avoid the disgrace."

"Not worth the trouble, Dick—decidedly not."

"And for another thing," continued the wiser boy, "you would be fitter, by and by, to—to—"

"To do my duty, I suppose you mean," interposed George.

"Just so; at least it is near enough to what I was going to say," replied Dick.

"Ah," said the other, "this is all very fine; but how is all this stuff—Latin now, for instance—to make me *fitter*, as you say—you won't find such a word in Murray, though, I fancy; but *fitter* let it be, if you like—to do my duty, and so on?"

"Mr. Weston says—"

"Yes, yes,—I know what Mr. Weston says about Latin, and so you need not trouble yourself to repeat it. It may be all very well for him. But look here, when I leave school, (and the time is not far off, I hope,) of what use will Latin and mathematics, and more than half of the other stupid things we are

bored with here—I say, of what use will they be to me?”

“You don’t know yet, George.”

“Yes I do: they will be of no use. I am to live with my rich old uncle, who cares as much about Latin as one of his horses, and not much more. My time will be taken up in riding about the farm with him, or without him, looking after his men, and things of that sort. And after a time when the dear old uncle is gone—not that I shall wish him dead; but he is old, and cannot live long—then the farm is to come to me, with plenty of money into the bargain, and I shall settle down into a country gentleman; my mother and sister will live with me, and won’t I be happy then? But as to the Latin and all this school nonsense, it really won’t be of any use, Dick, and it is not worth the trouble of cramming my head with it. I wonder my mother should wish me to become classical, as she says. Only fancy the idea of a classical farmer! If I had to work my way in some profession or other, that would be a different thing, eh?”

Dick did not carry on the argument which he had introduced. He was but a boy, though a thoughtful one; and he did not know how to reply to his friend’s long vindication of himself, except by saying—

“I think, George, if your mother wishes it, that ought to be enough.”

And surely this was one of the best replies Dick could make.

George did not attempt a rejoinder, but went on talking on a subject that never tired him—his great expectations, and pleasant anticipations. George's mother was a widow, and far from rich; but she had a kind, old and rather eccentric relative—the same uncle of whom George was frequently making a boast—who was rich, very rich, most of his acquaintance thought; and he had placed George at one school, and George's sister at another. During the holidays he had them at his house, and petted them; he promised George to make a farmer and a man of him; to leave him his farm—a very large one—and the greater part of his fortune; and, more than this, he meant to do it. No wonder, therefore, that George was elated with his prospects, and sometimes boasted of them; neither is it any wonder that he was often thinking of the pleasures of the time when he should be rich, and, was building castles in the air, very tall and grand, when he ought to have been working out a sum or a problem, learning a lesson, or writing an exercise.

“You will come and see me, Dick, when I get to Willow Grove for good, and when you have left school. You shall pay me a long visit—I know uncle will like to have you there; and we will ride and fish and shoot just as it suits our fancy. Ah! a wonderful deal better

that will be than this stupid school work—won't it?"

"Thank you, George," said Dick; "but I fancy I shall not be able to do that. I have no rich old uncle, you know, to set me up in the world as you have; and as soon as I leave school I shall have to work at something or other—I do not know what; but most likely I shall have to be an apprentice; and then there will not be much riding and fishing and shooting for me, I suspect:" and Dick could not help heaving a little sigh as he spoke. He half envied his schoolfellow's bright prospects. "But how silly it is," he continued, "to be worrying one's self with what is to be! 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' eh, George? Come, let us have done prosing, and have a good game. See, there goes Morris with the bats and ball, and they can't do without us, I know; so come along." And in a few minutes the boys were hard at play.

"Go to now," says the Apostle James, "ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." James iv. 13-15.

Schoolboys! Let the truth conveyed by these words be imprinted on your memories. Take the lesson home to your hearts. You have need to be reminded that the bright hopes of this world may suddenly set in gloom and storm. You have need to prepare yourself for life's uncertainties. Your thoughts and boasts are often, "*My* mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved" you say; and you little think that it is but for God to hide his face and you will be troubled.

"George," said his tutor to him, in a kind and sympathizing tone, the day after that in which he had boasted to his friend Dick of his pleasant prospects in life,—“George, you are to return home to-day.”

“Home! sir,” the boy gasped, rather than spoke, for his master's tone and countenance alarmed him. “Is any thing the matter, sir?” and he burst into tears.

“I had a letter from your mother just now—”

“She is well then, sir? Oh, I was afraid—”

“Your mother is well; but your uncle—he is gone, George. He died suddenly yesterday; and your mother wishes you to return home for a few days. It is quite right. You have lost a dear and kind friend, George.”

“Yes, sir—oh yes, sir! What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do? My dear, good uncle!”

George was no hypocrite. He really had

loved his uncle, or rather his mother's uncle; and now that he was so suddenly made acquainted with his death, the selfish thought of being enriched by the sad event probably did not for a single moment, at that time, enter his mind. Sobbing bitterly, he left the school-room, and in less than an hour,—his eyes still red with weeping,—he stepped into a carriage, and was whirled away toward his home.

Many a speculating schoolfellow did the afflicted boy leave behind him, to wonder how much money would fall to George's share, and whether he would go at once to live at Willow Grove; and many an envious sigh was but half suppressed when these conjectures were whispered from one to another.

Two or three weeks passed away, and George returned to school. He was dressed in deep mourning, and he was pale too, and seemed very sad. He said nothing to the boys about the journey he had made, or the events which had taken place; and, curious as they were to know the extent of their schoolfellow's "good fortune," as they termed it, they were too shy to put the question, "How much money did your uncle leave you, George?"

But though they did not find out this secret, they were not long in perceiving a most extraordinary change in George. He became suddenly studious. All his old habits of carelessness and unconcern were abandoned. He

no longer subjected himself to the disgrace of being constantly "lectured" for his want of application. It was evident that he could be roused to diligence, and that he had been thus roused.

This was not the only alteration which, in this short time, had taken place in the boy. Formerly, he had been careless in his expenses; the small stock of money which, after every vacation, he had brought with him to school, had been soon exhausted; and he had, more than once, incurred rebuke for borrowing from his school-fellows for some unnecessary expenditure. Now, he began to keep his pockets so closely buttoned, and seemed so reluctant to part with a single penny from his re-filled purse, that he ran a great risk of being set down as a miser.

To crown all, George became so reserved and morose, that, after a few attempts on the part of some of his better-tempered young friends to "draw him out," as they said, after his old fashion, they gave up in despair, declaring among themselves that it was useless to try to please him; and that, "if he had lost an old uncle, he need not be everlastingly sulky and cross, as if that would do any good."

"I do not believe," said one of the boys, one day, "that it is his uncle's death makes him so queer and sulky. No, no; he is proud of his money,—depend upon it,—and thinks

himself above us all because he is well off. I have no patience with such nonsense."

And no sooner had this new idea possessed the minds of George's school-fellows, than they began to show in many ways their contempt of this pride of wealth in him. Excepting Dick, scarcely one cared afterward to notice him; and even he was far less friendly than before. Thus the bereaved boy was solitary as well as sad.

But this seemed very little to move him. He plodded on doggedly and silently with his studies, with every appearance of determination to make up for the time he had lost. And he succeeded. He was no longer in constant disgrace, but often excited the wondering approval of his master by his strange industry and perseverance. What could be the cause of this sudden change, and would it be permanent?

Yes; it was permanent. The holidays came and were over, and George, with most of his school-fellows, returned to school. But even during the holidays the boy had not been idle. While the others had, most of them, laid aside their books, and forgotten as much as they could of what they previously learned, and thus had to come up again with great labour and much pains to the point at which they had left off, George had toiled on and reached a position which he had never before attained.

"You astonish me, George," said his teacher, "by your determination and industry; nay, I am not sure that you have not worked too hard. We must not forget that the bow never relaxed, will snap. Be prudent, my boy, as well as diligent."

George's eye twinkled with gratified self-approbation, and from that time he worked on with still greater ardour. At the same time, his moroseness in part wore away, and he again sought companionship. But there were some subjects of conversation on which he maintained a stubborn silence:—he could not be led to speak of his late uncle, nor of Willow Grove, nor of his own bright hopes for the future. There were signs, too, of settled unamiableness in the boy, which had formerly appeared. In the ardour of competition, he took ungenerous advantages of his competitors; and did a puzzled school-fellow need assistance in preparing a lesson, it was not of George that he sought it.

"You won't keep that place long," said he, with a disagreeable smile, one day when returning to his desk, to a class-mate who had "taken him down," and stood at the head of the class.

"Who is to prevent it?" asked the other, good-humouredly.

"You will see, by-and-by," retorted George.

Now, at that time, and in that school, there was a certain sort of dress, which the six foremost scholars were permitted to wear over their

other garments by way of honourable distinction; and very dignified and scholastic did this dress make the wearers appear. But as every privilege has its duty, so was it binding on each to wear his dress in the class; and as laws are useless unless accompanied by a penalty for disobedience, it was ordained that a breach of this law should subject the offender to an ignominious removal to the bottom of any class of which he was a member.

It is easy to make laws, but not always pleasant to enforce them. Moreover, sometimes honourable distinctions become burdensome; and privileges, when looked upon as duties, are neglected. Thus it came to pass that the dress was more often laid aside than worn in the class; and the penalty for disregarding the standing rule had not for many a long day been enforced. Nevertheless, the law remained unrepealed. George's class-mate had broken it; and George became an *informer*.

"Since I am appealed to," said the kind and wise principal of the school, "I must enforce the law, William, which you acknowledge yourself to have disobeyed. You will have to work upward from the bottom of each class to-morrow. As to you, George, had you been a little more generous, I should, for your sake, have been glad. It is possible, my boy, to be *too* exact; it would better have pleased me had you suffered your teacher to overlook or to

notice the offence, as he might see fit; and even now it shall be overlooked if you wish it. What do you say?"

George said nothing, and William lost his standing in the classes. He afterward lost a prize also, which, but for this day's misfortune, would have been his; and George gained it.

"What a shame it was of you, George!" remonstrated some of his school-fellows a few hours afterward. "So mean! So shabby!"

"Not at all," replied George. "I had a right to tell; and if you ever catch me without my class-dress—"

"When you have got one;"—"you have not got one yet," retorted one and another in ridicule.

—"When I have got one," continued George, calmly, "you may inform against me, and welcome."

Another vacation, another term time, and George was nearly at the head of the school; he stood second only to Dick, his former friend, and the only school-fellow with whom he still held much intercourse. He had overcome many difficulties by perseverance and application. He was no longer the "idle fellow" he had once boasted himself to be. But, more unamiable than ever, the announcement that this was his "last term" excited not the least regret.

It was a busy day, and an exciting one, on which the various marks of each boy were cast up, and the several prizes awarded. Of the twelve to be given, three of the more valuable had that half year been fairly won by George. He had expected a fourth, and was mortified.

"You have done famously, George," said Dick, that evening, as the two boys took their once accustomed walk around the play-ground. Dick was in good spirits, for the first prize (a pair of globes) would be his. "You have done famously, George."

"No, I have not," replied George; "I thought I should have had the sixth prize as well."

"You were very near it; and if you were coming back next term, you would be sure of it then, and the first prize, too."

"Yes; what is the good of telling me that, when you know I am not coming back? 'A miss is as bad as a mile,' is it not?"

"In your case it is, certainly," replied Dick, laughing; "however, you will soon be able to console yourself at Willow Grove for the loss of those prizes—eh?"

George turned quickly, and stared fiercely at his friend; then, resuming his walk and former look, and without replying to the question, he went on—

"It is very provoking to lose that sixth

prize. I might have had it if I had worked a little harder."

"I do not know that, George. If you had worked harder, Parker (the successful boy) might have worked harder too; and so you would still have been as you are. And besides," continued Dick, "I really think that three prizes at one time ought to satisfy any one. We should think for others as well as for ourselves, you know. It does not do to be selfish, George."

"Oh! as to that, I don't believe I am more selfish than you, Dick. I suspect you would rather have *your* prize than that any one else should have it. And all right, too; every one for himself, *I* say. 'Charity begins at home,' you know."

"Ay, but we have been told that it should not end at home; and there is something in that, I think," replied Dick, gravely; and the boys walked on a few steps in silence.

It was broken by Dick. "George," said he, "you are strangely altered since we first knew each other—three—ay, nearly four years ago."

"Am I?" asked George. "How?"

"Why, you used to be so merry and good-tempered, and now you have become so—so—"

"So what, Dick?" asked George, sharply.

"So dull and cross; excuse my saying so, George."

"Cross, eh? I don't know that I am cross, particularly. As to being dull, perhaps I have reason to be. Well, is that all?"

"No, not all, certainly. You used to be idle, and to make a sort of boast of it; and of late no boy in the school has worked so hard as you have."

"No harm in that, at any rate," replied George.

"To be sure not. But then there is another thing, if you won't be offended, George."

"Oh no—go on; let me know my faults. 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend,' says the wise man."—It was in an unpleasant, sarcastic tone that George said this: but Dick did not choose to notice the tone.

"Well, then, you have become so stingy and covetous—at least, you seem to be so. What can be the cause? I should have thought now, that you, of all others, would not have been so sharp after one single prize, and so vexed at not getting it, when you had three already; that is, I should have thought so of you once."

"Oh!" said George, coldly; "any thing else, Dick? Go on, if there is."

"No; I won't say any more. You are offended now."

"Not a bit," said the strange-tempered boy. "Oh no, quite the contrary."

Another round of the play-ground in silence, broken this time by George. "I am altered,

am I? Well, I suppose I am—in some things. There may be a reason for it, too. I'll tell you, Dick."

Dick listened, and George went on.

"You know very well how I used to brag about my rich old uncle, and Willow Grove, and all that sort of thing?"

Dick nodded assent.

"Very well; and you know, too, that he died, and when?"

"Yes," Dick said, "he remembered this."

"I have never mentioned it to any one, and nobody here knows it except our teacher; but it does not signify who knows it now I am going to leave. When uncle died, it was found out that the stupid old—"

"The what! George," exclaimed Dick in amazement. "O George!"

"Well, well, I beg his pardon and yours; but the long and short of it is, uncle had not made a will. He was always talking about it, but he never did it. You can guess the rest."

"No I cannot," said Dick; "what difference did that make to you?"

"What difference! That shows how much you know about such things. What difference, indeed! Why, instead of being rich, as I always thought I should be, I am just little better than a beggar." As the boy said this, his voice became husky with emotion, and his companion pitied him from his heart.

"Yes, a beggar! There was a nearer relation than my mother or I—my mother's cousin; and all the property went to him,—every bit of it."

"Well, I never dreamed of that. It must have been a disappointment. I feel for you, George."

"My uncle's heir was rich enough before," continued he; "but that did not signify."

"He took care to keep fast hold of Willow grove, and all the rest; and here I am."

"But did he not give your mother and you any thing?"

"Ah,—well,—I cannot say that exactly. He was very gracious, and talked very fine; he pays for my schooling and my sister's, as old uncle did; and he says he will do something for us when we leave school, and so forth."

"That is kind in him, is it not?" asked Dick. "I suppose he need not have done this."

"Kind! I don't call it very kind. He might have kept his money all to himself for what I care. And I would not have taken his paltry gifts, nor come back to school again, if I had had my will; but my mother would have it so."

"But you are glad you did come back, now, are you not?"

"Yes, I am," he replied. "At first, I was determined not to learn, but as I was on the road, I altered my mind."

“Ah!”

“Yes, I did; I thought to myself, I won’t let this disappointment beat me. I’ll do my best, and make up for lost time, and get the stuff in me to work up by and by; and I’ll take care of number one. There, now, you know it all, Dick. No, not all; I’ll tell you something more,” he continued, in a low, but determined tone: “Willow Grove shall be mine yet—that is, if I live,” he added. “I’ll work and scrape and save. I’ll make the most of my cousin’s help till I can do without it; and then——well, never mind; I know what I have to do, and I will do it.”

Once more the boys walked on some minutes in silence; George perhaps pondering over his resolutions, and Dick wondering at what he had heard, and feeling uneasy, though he scarcely knew why, at the glance he had obtained of the workings of his companion’s mind. He could not distinctly see, or seeing, he could not have put into words, the fact that mortified pride and avarice had cast their influence over George’s better feelings, and had begun to curdle his affections. Industry he knew was praiseworthy, and resoluteness necessary to success in life; but, as shown by his friend, even these looked repulsive, if not absolutely bad. He turned to another subject for relief.

“What books will you choose, George, for your three prizes?”

"I don't know, yet. I do not know that I shall have books at all."

"What! Not have books? What then?"

"I have books enough," said George. "I shall not want books. I say, Dick—"

"Well?" replied Dick, perceiving that his companion hesitated.

"Look here: my three prizes, you know, come to just twenty-five dollars."

"Let me see," said Dick, gravely; "yes, altogether; that is, twenty-five dollars' worth of books, you know: any books you like—that is, again, if your choice is approved by the higher powers."

"Just so," said George. "Well, now, what difference would it make to Mr. D——, supposing I were to have the money instead of the books?"

"George!" exclaimed his amazed companion; "I never heard of such a thing—never!"

"Perhaps not," said George, coldly; "but I don't see, for all that—"

"How could such a thought have entered your head, George? Why, I would not take double the value in money instead of *my* prize: you must be joking."

"Joking! Not at all. I heard a man say, once, that joking is the most foolish thing on earth; one gets nothing by it. There is good sense in that; and I have given up joking ever since I heard it. No, no: I am serious. And

as to what *you* would do, or not do, that is not the question. I tell you, that twenty-five dollars in money will be a great deal better to me than twenty-five dollars' worth of musty books; and what will it signify to anybody else? I have a great mind to ask the master. I will, too. Why not?"

"What have you to ask the master, George?" was echoed by a pleasant voice near them. The boys knew it to be the voice of their tutor. They were just then close by a thick hedge which formed one of the boundaries of the playground, and separated it from the master's garden.

"Come in, my boys," he continued, unlocking a gate a little farther on, "and let me know what you have to ask. I have not been listening," he added, "and I really do not know what you have been saying; but I could not help accidentally hearing your last words, George. And if," he went on to say, "your request should be as reasonable as I hope it may be, it shall be gratified. Come in, and let us talk together as friends."

The two boys were rather confused, but they accepted the invitation.

It was a beautiful summer's evening, and the garden was in fine order. Mr. D—— was fond of flowers, and before he resumed his inquiry he turned into a side-path to show his scholars

a new variety of some favourite seedling which he himself had raised.

"And now for your wish, George; what is it?"

George, thus taken unawares, found more difficulty in expressing his wish than he had anticipated. He looked somewhat foolish, in fact, and stammered out that it was of no consequence.

"Nay," said his tutor, "but you need not be afraid to mention it; you are not ashamed of it, I hope. Your young friend shall put it into words for you, if you please. What is it, Dick?"

Dick looked at George. George nodded, as much as to say, "Yes, speak for me."

"George was saying, sir," replied Dick—"it was about the prizes, sir—his prizes; and he was saying that books will not be of much use to him, he thinks."

"Eh? His is a peculiar case, then. Well?"

"And so, sir, if you would not mind, he would rather have——" and Dick made an awkward stop.

"Don't be afraid," said Mr. D——, encouragingly. "He would rather have some philosophical apparatus, perhaps—an air pump, or an electrical machine, or a galvanic trough? If so, I will make no objection, though I am not sure that books would not be more useful."

"No, sir; that was not it. George wishes

to have, or that he might have, the money that the books would cost,—instead of the books.”

“Whew!” said, (or rather breathed) the tutor, in surprise; and then turning to George with a very grave countenance, asked, “Has Dick rightly explained your wish?”

“Yes, sir,” replied George, faintly.

Up the path walked Mr. D—— slowly and silently, and as slowly and silently did he come down again.

“You have made a mess of it,” whispered Dick to his companion.

“I don’t care if I have,” rejoined George in the same under-breath, but with lips that quivered a little. “I cannot see why there should be any difficulty about it.”

“I wish I was out of it, at all events,” said Dick.

“My boys,” said Mr. D——, as he came again to the place in which he had left them standing, “I can conceive of such a request, under some circumstances, being not only reasonable, but praiseworthy. Perhaps it may be so in your case, George; and if there be any good reason for the exchange, it shall be made, though it will be a bad precedent. Come, then, tell me why you wish for the money rather than the books.”

“It will be of more use to me, sir.”

“I am not quite sure of that, George. That

must depend on the use to which it is put. You will not, therefore, think me unreasonable if I ask what immediate and important purpose you have in view for this money?"

George was compelled to acknowledge that he had none.

"I am afraid I understand you, then," said Mr. D——, after many other questions and replies, which need not be repeated—and he spoke seriously and somewhat sadly—"I think I understand you to mean that you value money, not for the proper uses to which it may be put, but for its own sake. You wish to be rich; you *mean*—if God will permit it—to be rich; and you would like to have this certain sum, twenty-five dollars, to lay as a foundation for future accumulations. Am I right?"

Yes, so far right that George did not dissent from the way of putting the case.

"You have been disappointed in your early hopes and prospects; your young friend here,—is he aware of this?"

"Yes, sir; I have told him all about it."

"Then I may speak freely before him. I feel for you, George. I have felt very much for you. At first I hoped the disappointment had done you good, in stirring you up to diligence and self-dependence. It is well for a young man to feel that, for his success in life; he must put forth the energies which he has at his command, and use the talents which God has

given him. Great expectations from others have too often an injurious effect upon us."

"And I *have* worked hard, sir, since then," George replied.

"I gladly bear witness to this; and I trust that, after all, I shall not be disappointed in the result. But the result will be disappointment, my young friend, if the attainment of wealth should unhappily be the only or principal object of your diligence,—the end to which all your acquisitions of knowledge are to be the means. 'A man's life,' my boys, 'consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' These are the words of Him who was, in himself, wisdom and truth. Do not disregard them, I pray you."

"But money is useful, sir," interposed Dick, (who wished to shield his friend from the imputation of covetousness;) "is it not, sir?" he asked.

"Useful? Yes, Dick, rightly employed. It is useful when we exchange it for bread, potatoes, or meat; coats, hats, or shoes, with common necessities of a like nature. It is useful when it pays rent, taxes, and service, or when it provides us with fuel. It is useful, too, in a higher degree, when it supplies our intellectual requirements; in a still higher degree, when it enables its possessor to do good to all men; and in the highest degree of all, when employed for the glory of its great Giver. But money

in itself, Dick, is useless. We can neither eat it, nor drink it; it will neither clothe us, nor warm us, nor defend us. Nay, it is often worse than useless; it is positively and fearfully injurious. When it panders to our evil passions, and purchases for us unhallowed enjoyments; or when its possession becomes a predominant desire, and we make it our god—sacrificing to it health, integrity, talent, and soul—then money becomes a fearful curse. ‘The love of money,’ my young friends, ‘is the root of all evil’—so says the apostle; ‘which,’ he adds, ‘while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.’ It is very sad when this happens, is it not?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Dick; “but people who are rich do not always love their money like that; do they, sir?”

“Oh no; there are those who are ‘rich in faith,’ as well as rich in wealth. But some do; and let me tell you that those who have riches have many temptations, and that the love of money is a growing and greedy affection—never satisfied. I was told, the other day, of a gentleman who had a large sum of money left him. Before this he was generous and happy; afterward he became both miserly and miserable. Can you guess why? I dare say not. I will tell you. He found out that, what with his recently acquired property and what

he had before, he was worth, as he said, *only* four hundred thousand dollars; and he wished to be worth five hundred thousand. So, to attain this object, he began to deny himself much that he might have enjoyed, and to keep back from all means of doing good with his wealth. 'He could no longer afford to be liberal,' he said."

George sighed, as he heard this story.

"Why that sigh, George?" asked his tutor.

"Five hundred thousand dollars is a great deal of money, sir. If I had but fifty thousand, I would not want to be richer."

"You think so, George, but probably you are mistaken. However, this poor man of whom I was telling you—he died miserably, and confessed at last, what multitudes besides have found to their cost, that 'Gold may be bought too dear.'"

"And now, George, to come back to your request: I cannot grant it. You do not really need the money. Your relative's intentions toward you are liberal; and after you leave school you will be placed in a situation in which your talents and education, combined with industry and honesty, will make honourable way for you. Your necessary wants will be supplied, and the twenty-five dollars which you covet would either be needlessly spent or selfishly hoarded. I trust you will succeed in life; and if you should become rich, I trust,

also, you will be kept from the snares of wealth. But remember, George—remember, both of you,—that even ‘gold may be bought too dear’—too dear, if obtained at the cost of health, or happiness, or honour, or usefulness; and, if taken in exchange for eternal life, *too dear*, INFINITELY TOO DEAR.”

George left the garden dissatisfied and angry. “I don’t care,” said he to his companion, when they were once more by themselves. “It is all very fine to talk about such things, especially when one has all the talk to one’s self, and must not be answered. So, ‘gold may be bought too dear,’ may it? Of course it may; but it may be bought cheap, too, if one goes to the right market for it. Well, well; we shall see.”

Some years ago, a middle-aged person lived at Willow Grove. This was our old school-fellow, George. *Willow Grove was his*: he had purchased it of a son of his uncle’s heir. He was said to be very rich, as well as very miserable; and these are the outlines of his history, as you might have heard them from the lips of an aged man, his near neighbour:—

“Yes, sir; that is George, as we used to call him when the old gentleman, his mother’s uncle, was alive; and when the boy, as he was then, came backward and forward from his mother’s as he pleased, and spent

most of his holiday time at Willow Grove. He was an open, kind-hearted boy then, full of fun ; but he did not like work, they said, and he said so, too. But he made sure of his uncle's estate, and so it was thought not to signify greatly.

“But ‘there’s many a slip ’twixt the cup and the lip’—an old proverb, sir, but a true one ; and master George found it out by experience. Ah, you should have seen the way he was in when it was found that the old squire had died without making a will, and that all the property went to the next heir, master George’s cousin, or, more properly, his mother’s cousin. However, there was no help for it ; and the new comer was a straightforward, honourable man. He did not give up his rights, of course ; but he behaved handsomely to George’s mother, and promised to start George and his sister comfortably in the world, and to go on bearing their school expenses, as his uncle had done.

“Yes, sir, George went to school again ; and when he came home for the holidays, everybody noticed what a difference there was in him. He had lost all his fun, and had turned out to be what they call ‘a hard student.’ His mother was pleased with this, and so was their cousin : but his altered manners—these did not please them so well ; they had become so gloomy and cold.

“Well, sir, after a year or two, master George left school and went to the city; and we saw nothing more of him for a long time, only about once a year he used to come to these parts for a few days to see his mother and sister; but at last he left this off. We heard a little about him, though, at times, through his mother—an old friend of mine, sir, and a Christian woman, one of the right sort, sir. She used to grieve sorely sometimes about George; not that he turned out badly altogether; he was not profligate, nor idle, but he seemed, she said, to have lost his former affection, and shut up his heart, as one may say, against the best things: he was all for money-getting; up early and late at his business, whatever that might be—and I do not remember now what it was, nor does it signify—but he was never satisfied.

“Time went on, sir, and George became a man; he had served out his time, and came home a few weeks. I saw a good deal of him then; he often called in to see me. But all his talk was about money, and what he would do when he got rich; how Willow Grove *should* be his, after all.

I talked a little to him, sir, in my way, and told him that money was not every thing. He laughed at me, and said I put in him mind of a saying of his old school-master, that ‘Gold may be bought too dear.’ ‘And so it may,

master George,' I said: but he did not seem to think so then; and what he thinks now it would be hard to say. I told him, that '*wisdom* is the principal thing;' but he pretended not to understand me.. My heart ached for him, for it was plain that he was set upon being rich; nothing else would go down with him.

"He went back to the city; and his cousin acted nobly in setting him up in business; and we heard, from time to time, that he was doing well as regards money-getting, that he was very selfish in business, and very diligent, and that every thing he took in hand prospered; and nothing more was heard of him, good or bad, until,—perhaps it may be ten years ago, —when his cousin at Willow Grove died, and George's mother and sister lost their chief support.

"Ah, sir, that was a trial of principle. There were several to come in for shares of the property—the children, you understand, of this cousin; and they said that as George was now well able to support his mother and sister, they did not see why they should continue the annuity. But George thought differently, and refused—would you believe it?—he refused to do any thing for his aged mother, or for his sister! He could not afford it, he said. Sir, his mother did not ask him twice—not that she was grieved; she knew the excuse

was a bad one, sir. From that time, she and her daughter struggled on, until the young woman was married to a man who knew her worth, and who afterward took care that the aged Christian should not know want.

“It was not long after this, that news came of George’s marriage. He had waited long, for he seemed to fear that the expenses of married life would keep him from his darling object. ‘I am not rich enough to think about marrying, was what he had always said. At last, however, as I was saying, he *did* marry. He married a woman with a fortune; a woman for whom, by all accounts, he never had the least love; but she had money, and that was enough for him.

“It was soon after this, that George came down here, where he had not been for many long years. He looked old then,—very old and careworn, and melancholy. It was plain that he had parted with health for gold in the way of business, and it was almost as plain that he had parted with happiness for gold in the way of marriage. This was buying gold pretty dear, I think.

“Well, he came to look after the Willow Grove estate, which he was determined to have if money would buy it. And money did buy it. So he went back to the city, gave up business, and brought down his wife. It was soon seen how little comfort poor George had got

with all his money. His wife had a sad temper, and was very proud. His own mother and sister were, so to speak, banished from his house ; for he dared not invite them to see him, had he wished it:—and I believe he did wish it, so long as they did not come to him for money ; and this they had no need to do. But, wish it or not, they were soon given to understand that they must be strangers at Willow Grove.

“It was a bad day for the tenants when the estate fell into George’s hands. He began at once to raise their rents, and to make them feel in other ways the difference between a considerate landlord and a hard one. His workmen dread him—he is so harsh and unfeeling ; and he is shunned by all the neighbourhood as a man who has no kindly feelings, no affection for any thing but gold.

“Not that George is a miser, as some people are miserly. He lives within his income, they say ; but he has the good things of this world : though as to enjoying them, he seems past that now. If he has any pleasure, it is in scheming to get richer ; for he is not yet satisfied with what he has, though he counts his property by tens of thousands. As to doing good with his money, you may judge that this is far from his thoughts—indeed it is ; he lives to himself.

“The worst of all is, that poor George seems dead to religion. The gold has entered his

soul. He knows better—his understanding is informed; he was early trained in the way of piety; one of the first books he ever read was the Bible, and he is acquainted with the gospel of salvation. But, his heart appears hardened against it, and he is angry at the very mention of it.

“George’s mother died some few months ago, after suffering deep distress of mind on account of her son. She saw him, at last, as she lay dying. What passed in that sad and solemn interview was not known; but it did seem to take some little hold upon him. Ah! if he should be brought, at last, to consider those solemn words of our Saviour, ‘What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?’ and should he give up his love of gold for the love of Christ—what a mercy would that be! And it is possible: yes, it is; for with God, you know, nothing is impossible: but ‘it is hard for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.’ ”

So then it seems that our old school-fellow had parted with domestic enjoyments, family affection, health, the high satisfaction of being useful, and was, at least, running a fearful risk of parting at last with eternal blessedness for the lust of wealth. Was not this a hard bargain? And may not gold be bought too dear?

Young reader, even while these pages are being written, the cry of "Gold! gold! more gold!" is heard; and thousands have flocked and are still flocking to the gold diggings of California and Australia. We do not say that this is wrong—in itself wrong; for gold is one of God's good gifts to men, if men will use it rightly: but all is not gold that glitters, and even pure gold may be bought too dear. How many a poor, despairing wretch, perishing with hunger, thirst, and mortal sickness, and deserted by selfish companions in these gold-abounding regions, has bewailed his folly in leaving home and all its comforts, that he might join in the scramble for wealth, and "make haste to be rich!" And what heaps of gold would such a one give, had he them to give, could he be restored to his lost happiness, while he acknowledges that "Gold may be bought too dear." But without going to Australia, or California, or elsewhere, and in the common walks of life, we may meet with many who, like our old school-fellow George, have been willing to barter every thing for gold, and find out their mistake when it is too late.

But what are we to think of those who are willing to part with HEAVEN for gold?

Dear young readers—school-boys now, as we were school-boys once—remember the Saviour's words, in the parable which he spoke when he said, "The ground of a certain rich man brought

forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke xii. 16-21.

"What, then," do you say, "are we not to try to get money?—Not to be industrious, frugal, persevering?"

If we were to say so, we should say what is very foolish and false. On the contrary, be industrious, be frugal, be persevering; and if industry, frugality, and perseverance, with integrity added to them, get you money—then get money.

But take care what it costs you besides; *beware of covetousness*; and "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." Do not neglect your soul for your body; nor part with the hope of heaven for the love of wealth; nor lay up treasure for yourself, instead of being rich toward God; nor set your affections on earthly riches, despising those which

are heavenly ; for if you do, you will find that you have bought *your* gold too dear.

There is a treasure which you cannot buy too dear. He, who though he was rich, yet for ourselves became poor, that we poor and guilty and lost might be made rich, offers pardon and peace and eternal life to all who, *on his terms*, will accept them.

Here is mercy and love ! Yes ; “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” That mercy you need : for without it, you will be everlastingly undone. Seek it, and by the aid of God’s Holy Spirit, seeking it so as to obtain it, you will feel compassion for those whose only treasure is on earth ; and this will be the thought of your heart—

“Go now, and boast of all your stores,
And tell how bright they shine :
Your heaps of glittering dust are yours,
And my Redeemer’s mine.”

II.

THE YOUNG CUMBRIAN.

OF all school-boys whom we ever knew, poor little Tom Smith was as unlikely as any to become the hero of a story. His name, his look, his manners, all might seem to forbid the thought. Ah! but there are many brave, noble, kind, and generous hearts under the plainest forms and commonest names; and Tom Smith, —*our* Tom Smith,—was one of them.

He was about eight years old when he made his first appearance at school, and his countenance, at first sight, was far from interesting. He was thin, pale, and stooping, so as to look almost deformed; and all his movements were awkward. When he spoke, he excited the laughter of his school-fellows—that is to say, of many of them; some had better manners than to laugh outright, though *they* were amused. His birth-place was in one of the northern counties of England, and he brought with him to school the peculiar dialect of home. Those who laughed did not remember that, had the case been reversed, and had they been sent to Northumberland, or Cumberland, or Dur-

ham, their speech too would there have sounded oddly enough.

Then poor little Tom—for by that somewhat vulgar diminutive was he always called—was a perfect ignoramus. He had never been to school, and could scarcely spell out a sentence composed of words of two syllables. In the use of pen or pencil he was as inexperienced and inexpert as an infant. Worse than this, it was soon found that, at that time, he had no great love for learning. He seemed dull of comprehension, and hated tasks as much as he could hate any thing. The confinement of school was, at first, dreadful to him. He was restless as a wild bird newly caught and caged, and fretted sorely over the necessary constraint he had to endure. Ah! few school-books were ever more blotted and blurred with bitter tears than poor little Tom Smith's.

And in play hours it was much the same. The ample play-ground seemed to be too straitened for our young Cumbrian, as Cumberland people are called; for, still like the unhappy caged wild bird, which beats its breast madly against the imprisoning wires, so did the poor boy, day after day, walk round and round, close to the high palings and hedges which shut him in, wishing with all his heart—who can doubt it?—that he had wings like the dove, that he might fly away and be at rest.

Weeks passed away from the time of his first

introduction to school life, and still the little Cumbrian was solitary and sad. No one seemed to care for him, except the master, who took kindly notice of him, and strove by gentle encouragements to reconcile him to his new life. But the poor boy shrunk from notice, and preferred communion with his own lonely and melancholy thoughts.

Little Tom was an orphan. His father had died about three years before the time we first knew him; his mother scarcely more than as many months. No wonder he was sad. Before his father's death, the child had been healthy and joyous; but afterward, he had drooped and pined like a tender plant deprived of its nutriment. None could tell what ailed him; but all foretold that he would not live long on earth; that his mother would be left alone, for she had no other child. And the mother, believing and fearing this, had petted the weak boy, and permitted him to roam at will over the beautiful hills of his native country, untrammelled by tasks and books; and had waited on him with such love as dwells only in a mother's breast.

The young Cumbrian loved nature; and nature was the book which he had studied under his mother's eye. He had studied it well, too. He knew much about the birds of the air, their "wood-notes wild," their names, their natures, and their nests; of the summer insects, too,

and the flowers of the field, and the hill side, and the valley. His mother had been his teacher, as together they daily roamed in search of health and strength—while she had health and strength to roam—over the wild but beautiful country around their pretty cottage. Happily for the little orphan and for herself, she could teach other things than these. She was a Christian; and she knew that, beautiful as is nature, and much as it tells of God's power and goodness to create and preserve, and to bless with daily mercies, it is the gospel alone which tells of his power to save—to save sinners. From her lips, therefore, had the boy heard the gospel, the good news of a Saviour; and God had blessed her teaching and her prayers. Afterward,—months after we first knew him,—the great incentive to learning, with him, was that he might be able to read and diligently study those blessed truths of which, young as he was, he was never ashamed, and which had first entered his heart from the lips of his mother.

But the oracles, who foreboded the boy's early removal from earth, were mistaken. The mother was taken; the child—weakly still, but gaining strength—was left. Ah! it is a woful stroke, this, to a fond and loving boy,—the death of a fond and loving mother. Surely few things on earth can equal it. But cheer up, orphan child. There is One who is the

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orphan's Friend. Trust in him, and you shall know what these words mean, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Yes, you shall know it: never fear.

Boys, merry-hearted boys, who know not what bereavement means, never treat an *orphan* school-boy unkindly. Think of your own parents as *dead*, and surely you will not have the heart to do it. Think of the great and glorious Jehovah as the "Father of the fatherless," the Parent of the parentless, and surely you will not have the courage to do it.

Yes, it was a mournful stroke to the little Cumbrian:—his father gone, his mother gone, strangers, only strangers around him! Then came his uncle, his mother's brother, and spoke comforting words to him, and bore him away; and then, after a few weeks, Tom Smith was sent to school. He would be rich, (he was told,) when he should have grown up to be a man, and he must receive a fitting education; but these words had failed to convey joy to his heart, or animation to his mind.

Time heals many sorrows; but some sorrows take a long time to heal. It was thus with the young Cumbrian; for, too weakly, too unapt, and too shy and shrinking to take part in the boisterous sports of his school-fellows, and too young, perhaps, (at any rate too ignorant,) to

join in their more intellectual recreations, he was in great danger of settling down into melancholy mopishness. His love of nature rescued him from this danger.

In one of the pleasant country rambles which used to vary the monotony of the school and play-ground, little Tom—his countenance lighted up and brightened with ecstasy—sprang forward, uttered a cry of delight, and commenced digging vigorously at the root of a small wild flower which his languid eye had spied in the meadow, through which the school-boys were passing. It was an uncommon flower where found, but common on the hills of Cumberland; and to the boy it seemed like the return of a long absent friend. He carefully removed it and conveyed it home; procured a pot, and planted it, and thenceforward, day after day, he visited his new-found treasure, watered and nourished it, and was no longer lonely.

It was not long after this, as the young Cumbrian, retired to a corner of the play-ground—*his* corner—was tending, with affectionate care, his own dear flower, and rejoicing in the fresh, healthy young buds it was putting forth, that his monitor—who had been just advanced to the oversight of the lowest class—came forward in all the full-blown importance of his new office:—

“Oh, here you are, you young dunce! I

thought I should find you here with your stupid weed. Do you remember what I told you yesterday?"

"About the multiplication table?" asked the little fellow,—timidly.

"Yes, about the multiplication table," responded the young official, mimicking (as we need not mimic here) the dialect and exaggerating the tones of the shrinking boy; "that's just it. Come, do you know it now?"

"I don't know:—I am not sure," replied the orphan, with a tear in his eye, and trembling at the bullying manner of his school-fellow. "I am afraid I am not perfect in it yet; it is very difficult."

"Nonsense!—difficult? that won't do. I never found it difficult, and I knew it long before I was as old as you are. But difficult or not, you know, I told you to learn it off-hand, and say it to me to-day, if you did not want to catch—you know what. I am not going to have dunces in *my* class, I can tell you."

"New brooms sweep clean, they say, Bowler,"—sarcastically observed a boy who just then was passing.

"Mind your own business, will you, Mansfield," replied the new monitor, turning angrily to the intruder; and then again addressing himself to the little Cumbrian—"I shan't let you off. Mr. Weston told me I was to get you on, and drill the table into you; for it was a

month ago, or more, that you began to learn it. You know *that*, don't you?"

Poor little Tom made no reply; but, still seated on the ground, he hugged his treasure, and looked up imploringly into the face of his monitor. He could read no pity there; and, looking downward, a big tear-drop or two fell upon the flower.

"Oh! blubbering, are you? You little milk-sop. Come, none of that; now, put down that stupid bit of earthenware, and let us hear what you know. Now then, do you mind? Put it down, I say, directly."

The frightened boy did as he was ordered.

"Now mind," said the young tyrant; "if you don't answer every question, I shall just make an end of that flower you make such a fuss about; do you hear?" And, saying this, he snatched up the flowerpot, and held it in his left hand.

"Oh, no, no, no; pray, pray, Mr. Bowler!" cried the poor child beseechingly, and springing to his feet, "don't, please don't. I will do any thing you tell me, if I can; and I will learn the table directly; but don't hurt my poor flower. Oh, you don't know how I love it!"

"Oh, love it, do you? Well, I don't care for that; and you need not think to come over me by calling me *mister*. I am no mister yet, but plain Jack; and I shall do just what I said; so here goes."

Mansfield was standing a little way off; and the unhappy young Cumbrian turned his eyes toward him, as much as to say, "Will you not take my part?" But the imploring look was unseen, or unnoticed, and again the boy stood despairingly before his tormentor. He was convinced that he would not be able to answer the questions put to him: he had been for days and weeks labouring at the multiplication table, but in vain; and the more he had striven, the more confused he had become.

"Here goes," shouted Bowler, again grasping the flower roughly with his right hand: "Twelve times seven, how many?"

"Seventy-two," gasped the poor boy,—after a short pause, and almost unconscious of what he said.

The next moment the broken flower-pot, and the mould it had contained, were strewed at his feet, and the tyrant was tearing to pieces the flower, root, and branch! "There, and there, and there!" he shouted exultingly. "I told you I would do it. Twelve times seven is seventy-two, is it? Ha, ha!"

Poor Tom uttered one sorrowful moan, as he looked at the scattered fragments of his pet plant. "My mother, my dear, dear mother!" he sobbed, and turned away.

"Bowler! I say Bowler! What have you been doing to the boy?" exclaimed Mansfield angrily, his attention at length roused by the loud

tones of the one, and the broken sob of the other. "What have you been doing, I say?"

"What is that to you? What business have you to interfere?"

"It is something to me; and I won't stand by and see a little fellow misused, whoever he may be. What has he done to you, Tom? Did he strike you?"

"Oh no," sobbed the boy. He could say no more; but pointed to the broken pot and ruined flower.

"Oh, is that all? Never mind. I'll get you another flower—pot and all—and let me see if he dare touch that. What is it all about? Come now, tell me."

"Just you tell me one thing," shouted Bowler, reddening with rage: "Are you monitor of the sixth class, or am I?"

"You are; and I am monitor of the third," replied Mansfield. "Well, what then?"

"Then you have no business to come between me and my boys; and you shan't either."

"Gently, Mr. Monitor of the sixth," replied Mansfield coolly. "If I see you ill treating any boy—yours, mine, or anybody else's—I shall interfere. And more than that, you know who else would interfere if I were to choose to tell him that you have been domineering. So you had better be quiet."

For some reason or other, Bowler thought so

too; and taking the advice, walked away in a silent rage, only muttering to himself that he would have it out of Tom Smith yet, when there should be no one to take his part.

"Now tell me all about it, Tom," said his self-constituted protector, kindly.

It was the first time Mansfield had taken any notice of the little fellow, and the kind tone unlocked Tom's heart, and he told his new friend some of his troubles.

"Well now, cheer up, Tom. I will teach you this dreadful multiplication table, and we will look after another flower for you next time we go out. Come along;" and Mansfield led his young friend to one of the rustic seats in the play-ground. "Come, don't be discouraged. I was, though, when I had to learn that table first; but my sister put me up to a good way of remembering nine times and twelve times—they puzzled me most; and then I soon got over it."

Mansfield was as good as his word, and better. He had a grateful scholar, and soon the formidable table was overcome, and many things beside, which, to the dis-spirited young Cumbrian, had till now seemed almost insurmountable. Another flower was found, too, and many other flowers; and Mansfield learned from his little friend many pleasant things about them which he had never dreamed of before. The whole school wondered at this friend-

ship, for Mansfield was one of the oldest and brightest of their number; but he let them wonder on.

Tom Smith was at the sixth class, and Bowler was monitor of the sixth, and Bowler had become Tom's enemy from the day in which Mansfield had become Tom's friend. And many a cruel way he had of making his enmity felt without openly showing it. Ah! how quick were his eyes to see a misshapen letter, a misspelt word, a mistaken figure, in the little orphan boy's copy, exercise, or sum; and how ready was his hand to put down a bad mark for these misdeeds! How sharp were his ears to catch a premature whisper, before it had half escaped the young Cumbrian's lips! "Another bad mark for that." How keenly did the monitor of the sixth peer into little Tom Smith's class at nine o'clock in the morning; and woe to poor Tom if a book had been carelessly thrown in out of true square. "Another bad mark for an untidy desk." Or if a pen or pencil below the legal number were found deficient—"a bad mark for that also." Or if, two minutes after the school-bell had rung, and when the roll was called over, it ever happened that Tom were just entering the schoolroom-door when his name was pronounced, who was ready with a loud "*Absent*" by way of response? Why, Bowler, the monitor of the

sixth class. "Another bad mark for that, Master Thomas."

"It is a shame for you to spite that boy so," said one, and another, and another, when these things happened; for, in time, by some means or other (especially by the generous countenance of Mansfield) the little orphan had become a favourite—so gentle, and loving, and trusting he had proved himself.

"What do you mean by shame?" exclaimed the monitor of the sixth, angrily and scornfully: "I have not gone beyond my authority, have I?"

"No, Bowler, no; these things were all 'according to law'—the *letter* of the law, mind you; but you sadly stopped short of the spirit of that other law, which might have been observed, and the first not disregarded—

'The new, best law of LOVE.'

Two years passed away, and the young Cumbrian had made rapid advances—ay, even towards the dignity of the monitor's post. He was no longer dull of comprehension. Though gentle in temper as ever he had been, even to timidity, he had become ardent in the pursuit of knowledge. Many of the boys whom he had seen at his first entering school, had left to return no more. Among them was his friend and protector, Mansfield:* many, however,

* We shall have more to say of Mansfield, however, in the next and following chapters, and of Bowler, too.

remained, and among these was Bowler, still, —in spite of vacancies above him—the monitor of the sixth class. He seemed a fixture there, for, one after another, younger boys had stepped over his head, and Tom Smith was pressing closely at his heels.

All the boys loved Smith—all but Bowler, whose old feelings of tyrannical contempt for the little dunce who did not know his multiplication table, were deepened into jealous aversion to the bright lad who, though three years younger than himself, and shorter by nearly a head, was constantly taking him down in class, and bade fair, in the way of frank and honourable emulation, to trip him up entirely. Not that our gentle, little—still little—Tom Smith had any wish to do this; but that it followed, as a matter of course, for the industrious, persevering, and active-minded to overtake the laggard. It is so everywhere, and it must therefore be so at school.

A very short time ago we read a beautiful description of another schoolboy. We thought of the young Cumbrian when we read it—it so agrees with our remembrance of him; and here it is:—

“At the head of every class he, of course, was found—but no ambition had he to be there; and like a bee that works among many thousand others in the clover field, heedless of their murmurs, and intent wholly on its own fragrant

toil, did he go from task to task—although that was no fitting name for the studious creature's meditations on all he read or wrought—no more a task for him to grow in knowledge and in thought than for a lily of the field to lift up its head toward the sun.

“That child's religion was like all the other parts of his character—as prone to tears as that of other children, when they read of the Divine Friend dying for them on the cross: but it was profounder far than theirs, when it shed no tears, and only made the paleness of his countenance more like that which we imagine to be the paleness of a phantom.

“No one ever saw him angry, complaining, or displeased; for angelic indeed was his temper, purified, like gold in fire, by suffering. He shunned not the company of other children, but loved all, as by them all he was more than beloved. In few of their plays could he take an active share; but sitting a little way off, still attached to the merry brotherhood, though in their society he had no part to enact, he read his book on the knoll, or, happy dreamer! sank away among the visions of his own thoughts.”

Such was “Wee Willie;” and such also was our little Tom Smith after his mind had, in a measure, become aroused and quickened into energy by his new-born love of learning. Such, in loveliness of character, had he ever been.

It was the first of May; this was one thing. It was the day to change places; that was another. On the first of every month, every desk was vacated, and each boy was open for advancement to a higher station, or liable to be degraded to a lower, as his number stood in the general casting up of the month's class books. These days were days of excitement to all, of pride and pleasure to some, and of disappointment, shame, and grief to others. By the events of these days were the diligent stimulated to greater diligence to keep steady their standing, and still to rise; while the dilatory were stirred up to exertion to regain the ground they had lost. Whether the moral effect of this constant incentive—this perpetual emulation—was equal to its educational value, or whether the evil passions of envy and malice were excited so as to counterbalance that value, need not be discussed here.

Hurrah! Well done, little Tom! Who would have thought it two years ago? Actually and absolutely has he—our young Cumbrian—again made progress, one, two, three steps in advance; he is now the sixth boy in the school, and from this day is he *the monitor of the sixth class*. The palm to him who deserves it.

Tom Smith the monitor of the sixth class! But where was his old tyrant, and more recently his ungenerous rival, Bowler? Alas for the uncertainty of mortal honours! He had

lost his office—degraded after being two years a *monitor*.

“It is a mistake; I am sure it is,” exclaimed poor Bowler, greatly agitated—trembling indeed with vexation and anger, as he heard his doom from the lips of the teacher, who was calling over the names.

“Yes, sir,” said the young Cumbrian, timidly, and blushing deep red, “I think there must be a mistake. I think the numbers must have been added up wrong, sir.”

“You shall both of you have the books to examine for yourselves after I have called over all the names,” said the teacher; “but I believe you will find that we are right.”

But still Bowler kept doggedly seated at his monitorial desk; and Tom lingered at his old one.

“You must move your books, Smith, said another boy, as the business of the day proceeded. “This is my desk, now.”

Tom knew that, and silently yielded up his desk and seat.

“Go at once to your new place, Tom, and turn Bowler out; I would,” said one. But Tom would not do that; and with his books under his arm, he looked like some poor folk we have heard of who were turned out of house and home into the street, unprovided with another, with beds and bedsteads, tables and chairs, pots and pans, in wild confusion around

them. He had not long to stand, however, in this state of perplexity. Half a dozen desks were speedily opened to receive the goods and chattels."

"Put them here"—and "here"—and "here"—till you have settled your account with Bowler," said as many voices; and Tom was relieved of his burden.

No; there was no mistake. The figures were right; the casting up was right. Bowler could not dispute this; nor could Tom.

"Well, are you satisfied?" asked Mr. Weston, the teacher.

Bowler scowled, and marching sullenly to his old desk—*his* no longer—commenced emptying it.

But what ailed the young Cumbrian that he stood stock-still before the great railed-in mahogany desk of the master—the dread tribunal, as it was, to every erring schoolboy?

"Well, Tom"—even the teachers called our young friend by the familiar name—"are you not satisfied?" said the usher.

"If you please, sir," he began, and then blushed a deeper scarlet than ever. His eyes, too, were swimming with tears.

Mr. Weston smiled encouragingly. It was like him to do so. A kinder man than he never drew breath.

"If you please, sir, could not Bowler keep his desk? I don't wish to take him down, sir;

I don't indeed. I am so sorry this has happened, sir."

"I am sorry too, Tom, if you are sorry; but really there is no help for it that I can see."

"Would you be so kind, sir, as to ask Mr. D——? I think he would not mind this once—just this once, you know, sir."

"I will ask him, certainly, if you wish it; but it will be useless."

Yes, quite useless. Tom rose, and Bowler sank.

"I don't care a fig about it," said Bowler—(he did, though;) "it was all chance"—(it was not, though;) "and this is my last term at school: but if Smith shows any airs!—ah, let him if he dare."

There was little danger of Tom's showing airs. He bore his honours meekly; and, but for an occasional fiery glance of his dark eye, when his rival crossed his path in the playground, Bowler seemed almost to have forgotten his defeat.

The few weeks which intervened between the first of May and the midsummer holidays were soon over, and, full of hope and expectation, every boy was looking forward to the morrow. It was the last day at school, and a long ramble in the fields and woods was to wind up the business of the half year.

That afternoon, in the thickest part of a shady grove, two boys, separated from the rest

of their schoolfellows, who were widely scattered in groups of twos and threes, suddenly met, and faced each other. Suddenly, but not accidentally, for the smaller and younger, had been, through that whole afternoon's ramble, narrowly watched, and stealthily followed by the older and bigger. •

"Now, Smith," said Bowler—for he it was—"we will just settle our scores before we part."

If the little fellow had doubted the meaning of the words he heard, he could hardly have misinterpreted the look and tone. He turned away hastily, and would have attempted to escape, but Bowler was too much in earnest to permit it. A few long strides, and the boys were within arm's length of each other.

"You didn't think to shirk me so, did you, Mr. Monitor?" said the big boy with a sneer. "Take that!"

The *that* was a violent blow.

Poor Smith shrieked with pain and fear.

"Cry away," said Bowler; "there is nobody near enough to hear you. I took care of that: now, will you fight or won't you?"

"No," replied the abused boy, "I will not fight. I don't know how to fight; and if I did, I would not. It is like a coward to strike one so much less, and so much weaker than yourself:" and again the boy attempted to escape.

Vain attempt! Transported with rage, which had long been pent up—Cain-like—against the innocent cause of his disgrace, the cowardly lad struck the unresisting boy again and again to the ground.

Evening came; and the boys, tired—more tired by far with their day's recreation than with the hardest day's work—returned schoolward. It was not till they had reached this destination that one was discovered missing.

“Where is Bowler? Who has seen Bowler?”

No one had seen Bowler since the middle of the afternoon; and nowhere was Bowler to be found.

Long and anxious were the inquiries concerning him; and when, at length, it was quite clear that he had either been left behind, or had intentionally absented himself, the young Cumbrian, who had until then kept as much apart from his companions as he could, was observed by his teacher to be in a sad plight, and on being closely questioned, its cause was ascertained. Poor fellow! Bruised all over as he was, head, body, and limbs, with the infuriated blows of his enemy, his condition excited both compassion and just anger. The mystery was explained—at least the truth was suspected, that, having taken his revenge, Bowler had feared the consequences, and had run away homeward. And so it afterward proved.

Many years afterward, when all the boys of that generation had become men—such of them, let us rather say, as yet lived—notices were issued in a large provincial town that a course of lectures on some scientific subjects would be delivered by a stranger, in the assembly-room. Accordingly, a small number purchased tickets, and met together at the appointed time and place. Among these were a stout and pleasant-looking gentleman, one of the principal tradesmen of the town, and, arm-in-arm with him, his friend, thin, pale, and studious, the minister of one of its parishes. They took their seats, and looked around them.

“A poor speculation, I am afraid,” said the former to his friend.

“I fear so too, Mansfield,” replied the other, “if this is to be the extent of the audience.”

In a few minutes the lecturer made his appearance. He also looked round, and it was plain to see that he felt disappointed and anxious. He commenced his lecture, however, and succeeded in pleasing his audience. But, presently an odd change was observed to come over him. He turned red in the face, then pale, his lips quivered, his ideas seemed entangled and confused; he hesitated, he stammered, his voice became husky, and his mouth dry. These distressing symptoms excited the compassion of the lecturer's small audience, and they good-naturedly clapped

their hands and stamped their feet, by way of commendation and encouragement. Among these clappers none were more energetic than the clergyman and his friend.

This kind consideration had, in part, the desired effect. The lecturer, though he did not entirely recover his composure, was enabled to go on creditably, though his eyes seemed fixed, as by some fascination, to that particular part of the room where were seated the two gentlemen already mentioned; and it was an evident relief to him when his lecture was over.

"Mansfield," said the clergyman to his companion as they quitted the room, "do you know that lecturer?"

"No; how should I? And yet," he continued, "there is something in the cast of his eye and the shape of his mouth that puzzled me. I must have seen him before somewhere: but then, you know, I meet so many people who are strangers to me that it is no wonder. But do you know him?"

"Yes; and you knew him once. You went to school with him."

"No, surely not. Dutton—Dutton—I don't remember a boy of that name."

"Dutton is not his name—at least, it was not his name as a school-boy. Why he has chosen to alter it I cannot of course tell, but we knew him as Jack Bowler."

"Bowler! ah, so it is. How strange I did

not recognise him! Bowler—Jack Bowler! How very odd! No wonder he was put out of countenance when he saw you—that is, if his eye-sight and memory are as good as yours. What can be the meaning of his turning lecturer, and changing his name? Poor fellow! he looks needy enough, and it serves him right, too, for his treatment of you. Ah, he was an ill-conducted fellow, to say the best of him. Well, you won't go near him to-morrow night, I should think."

"Why not, Mansfield?"

"Why not? Oh, for no particular reason," returned Mansfield, laughing; "only, my dear friend, I should have thought you had had enough of Bowler in days gone by."

"That was a long time ago; and you know our old master used to warn us not to stir up old grievances."

"True; but he did not tell us to forget them, that I remember."

"But the Bible, Mansfield, teaches us something still better. Well, good night," he added, as they reached Mr. Mansfield's door; "I shall call for you to-morrow evening."

Before the morrow evening arrived, however, an unexpected stop had been put to the whole business. The lecturer had disappeared, and the sale of tickets had been countermanded.

"He was afraid to face you again, depend upon it," said Mr. Mansfield to his friend when

they again met; and he laughed heartily at the embarrassment into which Mr. Lecturer had been thrown on the former evening by the apparition of "little Tom Smith."

"I hope I did not drive him away," replied the clergyman, mildly. "I do not look very formidable, I think."

The story of the little Cumbrian is nearly ended—not quite."

"Blessings on him, whoever he is," said a sobbing man, holding in his hand an open letter, from the folds of which, as he opened it, had dropped a bank-note of some value; "I did not think we had a friend left in the world, Caroline—not one, at least, who could help us; and to think of this!"

It was a miserable lodging in a wretched street in one of the poverty-stricken parts of a great city, that these words were spoken. The listener was a wan and seemingly half-starved woman, nursing a feeble infant; while at her knee, or near it, were two other children, almost unclothed, and crying—perhaps in sympathy with their parents. The speaker was the same Jack Bowler!

"Has the letter no signature?—Are you sure? Has it no post-mark?"

No, it had only the post-mark, and no signature. It contained but a few lines of Christian kindness and consolation, and a hope that the

enclosed trifle—ah! it was no trifle to poor Bowler—would assist in relieving his present necessities.

“Cannot you *guess*, who this friend is?” asked the wife with excusable curiosity.

The husband did not immediately reply; and when he did, it was in a low, troubled, broken tone, and with a burning cheek.

“I can guess,” he said; “and I do. There was a boy at school—a little orphan boy—whom I hated, and—do not despise me, Caroline, though I despise myself when I think of it—yes, I hated the poor little orphan, and grievously misused him.* Well, when I went on that unfortunate lecturing tour last summer, who should start up before me but this same boy—in company with, as I afterward found, a clergyman. I knew him as soon as I saw him; and I thought that he knew me too. I was thunder-struck, or conscience-struck, and could scarcely go on. There was I, a poor shabby adventurer, obliged to take a false name for fear of my creditors, while striving to earn a few shillings to keep starvation from our door; and there was he, evidently a prosperous man! I did not know which way to turn, and nearly broke down in the middle of my lecture; but he looked kindly—ay, Christianly—upon me, and that encouraged me. But how I got through the rest of the evening I don’t know; and the next day, like a coward, I slipped off.

I dreaded to see him again. You know the rest, Caroline, for that was my last attempt at lecturing. I had not the heart to try elsewhere, and that brought me home."

"And do you think that this—this letter came from him?"

"It did; I am sure of it."

Bowler was right; and it was but one of a long series of acts of kindness which he and his, thereafter, received from the young Cumbrian, who had not learned in vain the lessons of Him who said—who says to all—"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love you enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. v. 43-48.

And did Bowler profit by the lesson *he* thus learned? Yes, he did.

And now, young reader, what do you think of our little Tom Smith? Or rather, what do you think of the principles by which he was actuated?

"Ah," do you say, "it is all very fine—this forgiveness of injuries, and loving our enemies, and overcoming evil with good; but—"

Yes, yes; we know there is a "*but*," and what it is. "But," you would say, "it goes against the grain to put up with bad usage, and to do good to them that have done us all the mischief which was in their power."

Yes, it does go very much against the grain, as you would say; that is, it goes against our natural tempers and dispositions. But "*they that are Christ's*," you know, have another rule to go by; and that rule teaches them to do what otherwise they would not do, and could not sincerely and from the heart do. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:" and this fruit springs up, and grows, and ripens in the heart where Jesus Christ reigns.

Dear young friends, if the Lord Jesus Christ had not loved his enemies, and forgiven the severest injuries inflicted on him as a man; and if he had not, as "God over all, blessed for ever," done this and more, what would have become of us, rebels and sinners as we are? "But God commendeth his love toward us, in

that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "He," you know, "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." In all this he has left us "an example, that we should follow his steps;" and just in proportion as we are like Christ, "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking," will be "put away, with all malice," and we shall "be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us."

Now, our young Cumbrian had been made "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;" he had learned of Him who was "meek and lowly of heart;" and this was the secret of his forgiving and loving temper.

Yes, indeed; and the Bible had, as he told his friend Mansfield, taught him "something better" than to stir up old grievances: it had taught him freely to forgive, as he had been freely forgiven; it had taught him, too, not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good. And this is the temper we must all of us cherish, if we would be like Christ.

And if we are not like Christ—ah! what an IF that is!

Are you ever persecuted by some overgrown, ill-natured schoolfellow, who, you think and say,

has a spite against you? And does your heart swell with anger against him? Be like Christ; forgive! Think of Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself; do not render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. Do you think you have no friend to take your part, and that it is hard to bear the spite and malice of another? Well, but you have a Friend, if you will make him your friend—"a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" and he encourages you to come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need. Cast your burden on him, and he will sustain you.

But do you say you don't know how to do this; it is not what you are used to, to go to God by Jesus Christ; and you don't think he is your Friend?

Then it is high time for you to go to him, seeking, by the help of the Holy Spirit, pardon for your sin and rebellion against him. You are encouraged to do this by his word; and in receiving his forgiveness, you will learn also *how to forgive*.

III.

BARDOUR.

ABOUT the time that Mansfield was good-naturedly beginning to help the little Cumbrian out of his difficulties connected with the multiplication table, a "new boy" made his appearance at school; and something like the following conversation took place in the school-room during play hours.

"Have you seen Johnny Newcomb, yet?"

"No. Who is he?"

"Oh, I don't know his name—that is, I forget it, for Mr. Harpur told me. Barton, is it?—Barlow? No—Bar something, however; but that does not signify. But he is a dashing sort of fellow, they say. He came this morning, in a grand carriage of some sort or other, along with his father or his uncle—his uncle, I think; and they say he is the son of a governor, or judge, or something of that kind."

"Whom do you mean by 'he?' Is it the new boy, or his uncle?"

"Why, his uncle, of course. He is the Honourable Somebody Something, they say."

"You have a strange way of expressing your

meaning this afternoon, friend Willy; or your no meaning, rather," said Mansfield, who was one of the speakers. "You call a boy whose name you do not know 'Johnny Newcome;' you speak of a gentleman being of a certain 'kind,' and you tell me that 'they say' this and that. Who are the 'they!'"

"Oh, never mind; if I were to tell you that James told me all about it—except what Mr. Harpur said—you would say it is against the rule to be talking with the servants; as if we could be always minding our p's and q's. But about this new boy—Bar—Bar—Bardour; ay, that is his name—Bardour: I shan't like him, I know; shall you?"

"Really, said Mansfield, laughing, "I do not know; how should I, when I have not even seen him? And how do you know that you shall not like him!"

"Why, of course, he will be proud, and very likely won't speak to any of us, because his uncle is so grand."

"I don't see that exactly, Willy: but if it should be so, we shall not be obliged to say much to him; so we shall be even so far."

"No, that is very true; but it is so disagreeable to have people about who think so much of themselves, and all that."

"There, you are talking nonsense again, Willy," said Mansfield, good-humouredly; "what does 'all that' mean? and how do you

know that this Bardour thinks much of himself? or if he should, how can you make him out to be 'people?' "

"You are as bad as Mr. Weston, Mansfield," replied Willy; "you know very well what I mean. But never mind Bardour; that is not what I was going to say principally—about him, I mean; I wish you would just do that horrid sum for me that I got such a scolding about from Mr. Harpur to-day. You will, won't you?"

"I cannot exactly do it for you, Willy; I must not, you know; but—"

"You can if you like, only you are so particular; but I know what I know for all that."

"You must be very famous, then, Willy," replied Mansfield, still good-humouredly: "and what is it that you know that you know?"

"About Tom Smith: ah, you know. You do all his sums for *him*."

"Who tells you so, Willy?"

"Bowler says so; and he says he shall complain of you for interfering with the boys at his desk. If Smith had asked you to do a sum for him, you would have done it in a minute. You may as well do it for me; you have known me longer than you have him."

"Bowler says what is not correct; and he knows it," said Mansfield, quietly; "and he is quite welcome to complain if he pleases. I

have done no more for Smith than I am willing to do for you ; and if you will bring your book and slate, I will try to put you in the way of understanding the sum."

Willy went to his desk for his book and slate ; and for a quarter of an hour or more Mansfield was good-naturedly attempting to explain the rule which puzzled his school-fellow. But Willy was, on that particular occasion, dull of comprehension. He wanted to be at play ; and, every moment, his mind was wandering from what he was doing. In truth, he wanted not to be helped to work, but to have his work done for him. At length, after Mansfield, for the third time, was going over the same ground, Willy impatiently snatched away the book.

"It is of no use," said he, "and I won't try ; and I think it is very ill-natured of you not to do the sum, when you could help me out of this hobble in a minute : " and he put away the slate and book, and went sulkily into the play-ground.

The next day Willy was "kept in" for the unfinished sum.

He was leaning sullenly on his elbow, playing with himself on his slate at "fox and geese," when some one looked over his shoulder ; and turning quickly round, Willy saw that the observer was no other than Bardour,—the new boy.

"So, so, Mr. What's-your-name, that is how you do your work, is it?"

Willy answered with a kind of sound between a groan of impatience and a grunt of dissatisfaction.

"What is that to me, you would say," continued Bardour. "Well, never mind; do you want any help?"

"Not at fox and geese," said Willy.

"Pho! Shall I do your sum for you?"

"Yes, if you like," replied the other.

"Well, I do like, then, for once in a way. It is dreadfully dull; you seem to be such a queer set here. I want somebody to talk to, and you are the best-looking of the lot, though I can't say much for your beauty. However, you may do; so let me see what you are sticking at. Oh, is that all? Here goes, then; give me your pencil."

"But you must not be seen doing the sum for me," said Willy.

"Must not! Who says I must not?"

"Mr. Harpur won't let me off so."

"Mr. Harpur may do what he likes. What do I care for Mr. Harpur? However, I'll do the sum on my own slate, at my own desk. Mr. Harpur can't hinder me from that, I suppose; and you can do as you like about copying it afterward."

Willy was not over-scrupulous; and when, a little while afterward, Bardour laid before him

the slate half covered with figures, he copied them upon his own, which he took up to the teacher's desk. The sum was correct, and Willy was released.

"Come now," said Bardour, "let us go out, and you shall tell me all about these fellows, and the masters."

We will not follow the boys into the playground, for their conversation there was not particularly edifying. Let us take a passing glance at their characters.

Willy was one of a numerous class. He was not a genius—few boys are geniuses—nor was he a block-head; neither was he very indolent, when his mind or his body could be roused to exertion—otherwise he was. We have seen that he preferred that another should do his sum rather than be at the trouble of taxing his own brains, and that he had no objection that a law should be broken in the process. This was but a specimen of his general conduct. Like a person who, having good sound legs of his own, should choose to use a crutch until a crutch would be almost necessary to his moving; so Willy had weakened and crippled his powers of mind by thinking and acting, not as his conscience dictated, nor after independent and due reflection, but in imitation of others, and lazily yielding to the stronger or more active mind of some one who might happen to be about him. Thus, though one of the oldest in the

school, Willy was not a very bright scholar, nor was he, at any time, to be greatly depended upon for steadfastness in a right course. Like "a wave of the sea," he was "driven of the wind and tossed."

The new boy, Bardour, was a different sort of character altogether. He was a bold, daring, but unprincipled lad; quick at mischief and deceit; quick, also, to learn. His training had been unfavourable to his moral character, so had been the circumstances of his early life; and, thus far, he was to be pitied. His parents were dead; and he had been brought up in the house of his uncle, under the instruction of a private tutor. The uncle cared much about horses and dogs, and thought little about his nephew: the tutor cared much for his salary, and therefore had not neglected his pupil's head; but he had done nothing in the right education of his heart. It was not likely that he should have done much in this way, for he was secretly an infidel and a profligate man, though a good scholar. This sad deficiency in the most important part of the boy's education had not been supplied from any other quarter. His companions had been chosen from the stable-yard, where he had readily imbibed much that was vicious—nothing that was creditable or useful, unless we may except the knowledge of how to manage a horse, or to train a puppy.

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In consequence of some discreditable transaction, in which both Bardour and his private tutor were involved, the latter had been dismissed in disgrace, and the former was "packed off," as his uncle expressed it, to school, where he would be more strictly looked after. But, unhappily, the uncle had not thought it necessary to put the school-master on his guard, for he said, (or thought if he did not say,) "It is the master's business to find out what the boy is made of, and not mine to be speaking against my own nephew." Besides this, it is probable that the uncle did not really know much of his nephew's character, or did not attach much importance to what was wrong in it. Without warning, therefore, and without any extraordinary caution, an adept in low vice was introduced into the school, the play-ground and the sleeping-room.

As to Willy, the unexpected condescension of the new boy, whose uncle, being "a judge, or a governor, or something of that kind," was consequently, in his estimation, very great and grand, took him by surprise, and absolutely charmed him. He quite forgot his predetermination not to like him, and strutted with new-found importance by Bardour's side through the play-ground:

Mansfield smiled to see it; but for a few minutes, he joined the two boys.

"I shall not like him," thought he to him-

self, as he walked away; "Willy was right there."

"Who is that prig?" asked Bardour of his companion, when Mansfield was out of hearing.

"It is Mansfield; he is a great favourite with the master."

"Oh, he is, is he? He will be no favourite with *me*, I suspect. But what sort of a fellow is he?"

Willy replied, by telling how Mansfield had refused to help him out of his trouble with the "horrid sum."

"Indeed! Ah! he is one of the right honourables, I see. He won't do for me, then," said Bardour.

And thus he went on. In one hour, many injurious impressions had been made upon Willy's very susceptible mind; and it was prepared to receive more.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners." Bardour had not been many weeks at school before a very perceptible change had taken place in many of the scholars. A spirit of insubordination had sprung up, and habits of determined indolence or laziness seemed to have been suddenly formed. Quarrels, too, were more frequent: the school was broken into small bands or parties, which were constantly at a feud with each other; and, among

one set especially, there was a sad deterioration of morals.

This state of affairs was very uncomfortable to all, and it must have been very harassing and perplexing to the kind-tempered and conscientious master and his assistants: the more so, that they could not exactly discover the cause of the mischief which was too certainly going on. Indeed, they were not aware of the extent of it; and hoped that it was merely a temporary estrangement from right feeling, which would soon subside if not too particularly noticed. If they suspected Bardour as the fomentor of these new and unusual troubles, they had no particular grounds for suspicion. He seemed innocent enough.

In no boy was the alteration more visible than in Willy. Formerly, when under the influence of Mansfield, his conduct had been free from any gross misbehaviour; but now that his allegiance was transferred to a new leader, he was constantly rebellious, sullen, and in disgrace.

Between Mansfield and Bardour there seemed to be a strange antipathy; not openly shown, indeed, in disputes and violent altercations, but not the less complete. They avoided each other, rarely speaking together, and never joining in kindred amusements. In fact, they had no kindred amusements. Mansfield was a thorough hearty player; he could throw all

his energies into any game—cricket, football, or even marbles. Bardour sneered at this: he never played.

“What a big baby that Mansfield is!” said he, as he sauntered across the playground, accompanied by Willy and another satellite or two; “what a baby! Look at him, playing at marbles with Robinson and a lot of little fellows, and as eager at it as if it was the best thing in life. Bah! it makes me sick.”

Willy tried to imitate the sneer; but he could not manage it with a good grace. Had the truth been told, he liked a game of marbles too, and he envied Mansfield’s playfellows. There was a time when he would gladly have asked to join them: but it would have been treason against his leader to do so now, so he sauntered on.

But though Bardour pretended to feel contempt for Mansfield, he could not despise him, however much he might try to do it. He therefore kept aloof from him, and contented himself with reviling him at a safe distance, and with endeavouring to weaken his influence. In this he succeeded, and though Willy perhaps felt it to be both ungenerous and ungrateful to join in this cabal, he did not the less join in it. What could he do? He must have some one to look up to, admire, and imitate. If he kept on good terms with Mansfield, he must break with Bardour; and, upon the whole, it was

more convenient to be Bardour's friend than Mansfield's. He made his choice accordingly, and kept to it.

And thus, amid confusion, discomfort, suspicions, and jealousies, of which no one could trace the exact cause, the school broke up for the holidays. All were unusually glad to get away; and the puzzled teachers could only hope that at the close of the vacation a new leaf would be turned.

THE holidays were over, and most of the boys returned to school. Bardour and Willy were still close companions; by day they walked together, and talked together, generally apart from their school-fellows. They occupied the same room by night; and to them the remainder of this story will principally relate.

"What nonsense all this is!" said Bardour, as, one summer's evening, after prayer-time, the boys took a customary stroll in the playground, before going to bed.

"What is nonsense?" Willy asked.

"What? Why, these prayers. Prayers at morning, prayers at night, with long chapters: then there is church twice every Sunday, and a long lecture in the school-room into the bargain.

Willy had heard such things before from his companion, and he was past being shocked now: still he felt uncomfortable, for he had

been trained to respect, at least, the outward observances of religion. It would have been well for him if he had had firmness and independence of mind and thought to turn from such communications when they were first offered. He might then have been kept from that rapid and fearful progress which, commencing with "walking in the counsel of the ungodly," leads on to "sitting in the seat of the scornful," and brings the soul nearer and nearer the verge of eternal ruin. But even firmness and independence of mind, though combined with respect for the outward forms of godliness, are but poor safeguards against temptation when the power of godliness is wanting, and dependence upon Christ for help in time of need is unthought of.

How happy are they who have obeyed the heavenly injunction, "My son, give ME thine heart;" who have cried earnestly to a holy and gracious God, "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me;" who have experienced the purifying influences of the atoning blood which cleanseth from all sin, and the sanctifying power of the Spirit of God!

Yes, and how *safe* are such, compared with those who have desired and felt no such transforming power. Give your heart to Christ, then, young friend—schoolboy though you be. You need such a Protector and Guide—ay,

and Saviour also—as only he can be to you. Without him, his salvation and his help, your wisdom, strength, firmness, and independence of mind, are folly and weakness. Yourself a rebel against his government and his claims, how will you be prepared to resist the importunities of your fellow-rebels—differing from you in this only, that they are a little older—to go on from one step to another in iniquity, until, like them, you have learned to glory in your shame? Give your heart to Christ, then; lay hold of his strength; make him your refuge—his salvation your song—his law your delight: then, and then only, will you be safe.

Willy had never thought much of these things, and—the truth may as well be told—like a very great number of school-boys, he cared for none of them. He did not particularly wish or intend to be very wicked; nay, probably he thought religion to be a very good thing for those who liked it, for older people especially; but as for himself, why he did well enough without it, for the present.

We need not continue the dialogue we have interrupted, nor repeat the wicked folly and ribaldry uttered by Bardour, who avowed himself to be an infidel, and that he had been misled by his tutor.

The confession shocked Willy, who made some feeble efforts on the side of truth; but Bardour ridiculed him, and told him that he

would lend him a book that would soon convince him, but which he must not let anybody see. Just then the evening bell rang.

"There's the bell! We must go in now," said Willy, in a sort of mental stupor. "It is bed-time."

In another minute the play-ground was deserted, and the boys retired; some of them, in simple faith and child-like trust—may we not believe?—to commit themselves to God, through Christ, in hope of pardon, peace, and sanctification; some of them, it may be, to hurry through a form of devotion, ere closing their eyes in sleep; and some caring but little about either the form or the spirit of prayer.

Among these last was Willy. Ever since he had been the chamber-companion of Bardour, he had been ashamed to be seen bending before the God of all his mercies.

He went to bed, however, somewhat disturbed in mind. Bardour had never gone so far before; and to Willy there was, after all, something rather awful in the character which his friend had assumed and boasted of. An infidel! He, a boy, and yet an infidel! Well, he would think about it.

And then there was the book: he did not think he should read it. He did not particularly want to be an infidel. To be sure, it was very troublesome to be always making a sort of fuss about religion, or to be always thinking

about it; but then—and then—and then he fell asleep.

The morning found Willy refreshed, and the gloomy chill about his heart gone. "What nonsense Bardour did talk last night, to be sure," thought he, as he put on his clothes. "He was joking, no doubt."

No, he was not; he was never in more serious earnest. It may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that this boy Bardour, shrewd, bold, and daring, yet cunning, had, under the vile tuition of a base, designing man, been led to fancy himself a disbeliever of the Bible. When he had taken the trouble to read it, he had

"Read to doubt, or read to scorn;"

and when he heard it, it was with a mind steeped in prejudice and dislike.

Not that he understood what he was talking about when he took upon himself to pass his judgment upon it; but this was of little moment to him. He could talk; and he fancied he talked very wisely: this was enough.

Besides, it was very convenient for him to think he had no faith in a book which constantly condemned his thoughts and practices. Moreover, there would be some gratification to his mind—some credit to himself—if he could make a convert. He was quite serious, therefore, in his attempt upon his young companion.

Satan, the great adversary of God and man, has a good many agents in the world; and this boy was one of them.

“Here is the book I spoke to you about,” said he to Willy the next day. “Keep it close. They don’t pry much into what we read here, that’s one comfort.”

Willy took the book. He did not wish—nay, so much was he in the habit of submitting to the mind and will of another, that he hardly dared—to refuse it. “I need not read it,” thought he.

But he did read it. At first, the daring profaneness it contained made him feel uneasy; but these feelings soon went off, and, by little and little, as he could do it unobserved, Willy read the book through, and was vain of having done so. Thenceforward he could listen to Bardour’s frothy declamations against the Bible, and the religion of the Bible, unmoved. He could even join with him in jeering at holiness, and in mimicking the solemn language of devotion. Still all this was a secret between the two boys; and so well did they keep the secret that, though they revelled in their sin, they were yet undetected.

This was not all. We have spoken of one book of Bardour’s. He had others—vile and polluting to the imagination—and these, one by one, he cautiously put into the hands of his weak-minded associate.

Boys, dear boys, happy are you if you carry in your looks—whatever may be your complexion or form of features—so calm, placid, and outspoken a love of purity and regard for decency, as to compel the shameless to be silent in your presence. Happy are you still, if—should the word be spoken—your honest indignation rises at the insulting impurity, and causes the “vile person,” whoever he may be, to feel himself “contemned,” and to shrink abashed into the concealment of his own polluted mind. Be it ever so with you. Beware of tampering with such a snare to your soul as is to be found in “filthy conversation,” and in the pages of many a book. Be assured that no virtuous friendship can be formed with a school-fellow, whatever may be his talents or acquirements, who can venture to introduce the former; and that no book is safe for you to read which you would hide from a mother’s or a sister’s eye. “Be sober, be vigilant,” young friends; and put far from you “the instruction that causeth to err.” It rests much with yourselves whether or not you will be contaminated by corrupt communications and bad books. If you will but set your heart and your face like a rock against them, not forgetting to seek—but, above all things, seeking—that pure wisdom which cometh from above, and making God, through Jesus Christ, your refuge and

your strength, you may walk unharmed through even worse dangers than these:—

“Thrice happy youth! thy Maker’s care
Shall keep thee from the fowler’s snare:
Satan the fowler, who betrays
Unguarded souls a thousand ways.”

But if you do not thus act, and, on the contrary, invite the evil communications of those who are far advanced in shamelessness, you will not, it may be, have far to seek, nor will all the vigilance of teachers or parents shut them out. The poison will do its work; the ear and the eye will load the memory with defilement, and the stain will not come out—no, it will not. Well did the wise king of Israel know this when he wrote, “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.” Prov. iv. 14, 15.

But, once more and again, we earnestly counsel you to seek the pardon of *your own* sins, through the great atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the influences of God’s Holy Spirit to sanctify the soul. Without these, you have no safeguard. With these, you will be strong, (though with a strength not your own,) to resist the allurements of vice and vicious companions. Remember always who it is that is “able to keep you from falling.” Trust Him, young friends—trust HIM.

About two miles from the school was a village notorious for the ignorance and depravity of its inhabitants, and also for a large fair annually held in it, which was equally notorious for its scenes of profligacy and vice. Many attempts to abolish this fair had been made, but unavailingly.

Boys are not very wise in such matters. Year after year, as the fair time drew near, some of the schoolfellows of whom we write were apt to become discontented. They thought it hard to be kept shut up in school while so many were enjoying liberty and fun. They could see no such great harm in going to a fair once in a while, and considered it "too bad" that their master should be so particular. "He might as well give us one day out of the three," said they, as regularly as the year rolled round; "we would not get into any mischief. Where is the good of being so strict?"

It is almost needless to say, that if such complaints and longings as these reached the ears of the master, they did not move him in the wished-for direction. He was inexorable, and took no notice of them. The fair, indeed! Go to the fair!

A few days before the fair, in the year of Bardour's pupilage, the annual restlessness commenced. It was more than usually strong, for the spirit of insubordination of which we have spoken gave it life and activity.

Around Bardour was gathered a group of the repining ones. He was now the acknowledged leader in any thing denoting rebellion, though still he carried on his opposition to authority with an air of a good-natured dash, which made it sometimes difficult for his teachers to be very angry with him. They did not know the worst part of his character.

"All nonsense, Bowler; I tell you we will go—we must; I would not lose the fun for anything. You have no idea what sport we could have."

"No doubt of it, if we could get there; but what is the use of talking about it? We can't go, you know, and—"

"Nonsense!—can't go! I say again, the master will let us go if we ask him."

"No, no, no!" exclaimed half a dozen voices at once.

"Was he ever asked?" inquired Bardour.

No, never, certainly—all were sure of that; it was too well known what Mr. D——'s sentiments about the fair were.

"Why," said one, "he was one that tried, two or three years ago, to get it put down. The idea of asking him to let us go!"

"Well, for all that, I don't see any thing so preposterous in the idea," said Bardour; "and I vote for asking leave."

"All very fine," replied Bowler; "but who'll 'bell the cat?'"

"Oh, we will all go in a string; or what do you say to a round robin?"

No, no, oh dear no: all hung back in alarm at the very mention of it.

"What a set of cowards you all are! What is there to be afraid of? Well, if you won't I will—I and friend Willy here. We will go at once and ask for the holiday—eh, Willy?"

Willy would gladly have retreated from such undesirable pre-eminence; but from being Bardour's companion he had become almost his slave. He dared not refuse. He tried, however, to express his dissent. "What will be the use?" he began to ask.

"We'll see," replied his bolder companion. "Come along, he's just gone into school—come;" and he half dragged his friend along over the playground.

They soon returned to the half-scared boys. Willy looked very sheepish; Bardour very furious; and he applied some opprobrious names to the head-master in a not very subdued tone, as he mingled with the rest.

"I told you it would be of no use," said Willy; "and you have only got me into a scrape—you have."

"What did he say?—what?—what?" asked the gaping group, of their deputation.

"Say!" repeated Bardour, fiercely: "go and ask yourselves if you want to know. If you

had not been a pack of cowards you would have known without being told."

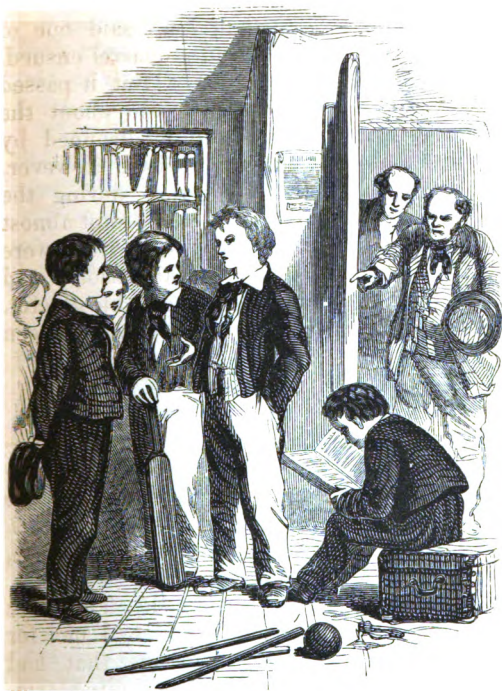
"No more a coward than you," said one of the boys thus taunted; and a quarrel ensued, which almost ended in blows. But it passed off, and very little more was said about the fair: the subject seemed to be dropped by common consent. It was noticed, however, and afterward remembered, that during the succeeding days Bardour and Willy kept almost aloof from their companions; that they were constantly in close private confabulation; and that Bardour especially was remarkable gleeful. Some great secret seemed to exist between them.

ONE day—it was the third day of the fair—as the boys were about to leave the breakfast-room, they were requested to remain. The teachers looked grave; and the scholars, catching the infection of gravity, looked so too, though why they knew not.

Presently, the master entered. The boys had seen him before, when they had met for morning prayers, and the change that had taken place was almost alarming—quite alarming to guilty consciences, if any were there. Accompanying the master was a stranger, shabbily dressed, dirty, unshorn, and otherwise ill-looking.

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School Days Reviewed.



Accompanying the master was a stranger. p. 96.

"What's the matter now?" whispered one boy to his neighbour.

"Hallo," said another, in an equally subdued tone, "look at Willy. Why, he is as pale as a turnip, and trembles like a leaf; what is the meaning of all this?"

This was bye-play. Meanwhile Mr. D—— looked sorrowfully around, then turned to the man, who stood a little nearer the door—"Have the kindness, my friend, to point them out to me," said he.

"*Them!*—point them out," repeated one wondering boy to his next companion as the man turned his inflamed eyes from one face to another.

What could it mean? Well, in this case ignorance was bliss.

The man was not long in his survey. "Them's them," he said, pointing with one hand to Bardour, with the other to Willy. It scarcely needed this, for their looks condemned the two boys—Willy especially. Bardour tried to brave out the accusation, whatever it might be, and to put on a look of innocence. But it was a poor attempt.

"Come with me, you two," said Mr. D——.

"Why, sir? What have I done?" asked Bardour: but the words seemed to die away on his lips, and without waiting for a reply he slowly left the room, accompanied by Willy.

"The boys may go into school now, Mr.

Weston," said the master, before he withdrew : and they went accordingly.

"What is it all about, Mr. Weston?" asked one, as they went : but Mr. Weston could not or would not say.

The head-master did not enter the school-room that morning, nor did Bardour, nor Willy ; and lessons were not very perfectly repeated, nor sums very correctly or expeditiously worked, nor copies and exercises very neatly written. In the afternoon a half-holiday was given, and a long walk taken. Bardour and Willy were still absent, and the boys wearied themselves in vain in striving to fathom the mystery.

Day after day passed, and still no fresh light was thrown upon the subject, except that it was known that the two boys—whatever had been their offence—were removed from their former bedroom, and were separately confined in two of the topmost chambers of the house, and that they took their meals and continued their studies thus in solitude. What could they have done ?

The holidays came, and the two prisoners had not been seen. The holidays were over ; and when the boys—those who had not done with school—returned, Willy was among the number, and he took his former place at his desk, as though nothing had happened. Bardour was no more seen.

Willy's old companions were generous. Much as they burned to know the secret, they forbore to ask it of him. He was generally silent; and gradually the remembrance of his separation and presumed disgrace died away. But, after all, the mystery was not completely hidden; and some such tradition as this long hung about the place, and was handed down from one set of boys to the next:—

“Bardour—ah! he was a sad fellow: he did not stay long; but whether he was taken away or turned away, no one knows but the head-master—at least none of the boys ever knew.

“There was a strange piece of work one fair time. Bardour wanted to go to the fair, and of course he was refused. So what did he do but persuade another of the boys, who slept with him in the little room that overlooks the playground, to get out of the window at night (the window is safely barred up now) and start off to the fair; and this was how they managed it:—Just before the fair time, a young fellow who had been a groom, or something of that kind, at Bardour's uncle's, came to live near the school, and to work at the livery stables; and he used to come at night over the fence into the playground, and help the boys to get down, and then went with them to the fair. They followed this plan two nights.

“And pretty pranks they played there—dancing in the booths, gambling, and drinking,

and more than that till two or three o'clock in the morning, and then getting back to bed. But it was found out in this way. The groom passed some bad money at one of the booths; and after they had left, the man to whom he gave it made the discovery, and followed the three all the way to the playground, and saw the two boys go in at the window. This was enough for him; so the next morning he came and made his complaint. He knew the two boys at once, and they were kept away from the others all the rest of that half year.

“And this was not all. The boy who went with Bardour was horribly frightened at what he had done, and turned evidence against him; and a shocking tale he told. Bardour's boxes were examined, and several books were found—such books! Bardour declared they were not his, that he knew nothing about them, and that somebody else must have put them there; but of course *that* would not go down with the master.

“Willy,—Bardour's companion,—came back the next half year, and nothing more was said or done to him; only the master kept a sharp look-out after him, till he left school; and so he did after the rest of the boys, especially the bigger ones. And as to Willy, he was not very fond of talking about Bardour; but one way or other, a bit at a time, thus much of the story came out.”

This legend conned over occasionally, for want of other subjects of conversation, or by way of change, is not probably far from the truth, though it conveys not "the whole truth." Indeed, poor Willy's experience of the fearful consequences of yielding to temptation, and the folly of being led into "almost all evil" by the example and persuasion of a strong-minded sinner, was sufficiently vivid, one would suppose, to teach him a lesson for life. It is to be hoped he profited by it. But though he might be sorry—though he might even sorrow "after a godly sort" for what he had done, and for the wickedness into which he had been led, he could never unlearn what he had learned, nor be "simple concerning evil."

It is well, dear young reader, to be brought back from our wanderings: but is it not better, think you, never to wander at all from the paths of purity and true wisdom? If our old school-fellow Willy became penitent, and afterward loathed the sins into which he had once been led, I am sure he has often blushed with shame, and has despised himself when he has thought of his weakness in yielding to temptation, and the avidity with which he became a partaker in another's guilt; and would be able to give a sad and solemn answer to the question, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death."

But perhaps Willy did not really regret his

past folly. It may be that he never truly repented of having given way to the seductions of vice. It is not a thing improbable that the vile books he had been tempted to read, and the scenes of sin he had been drawn in to witness, and in which he had been induced to share, produced effects which clung to his soul like an awful disease; and that at length he found in his own bitter experience, that "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James i. 15.) It is not long since we saw one who, like Willy, had been drawn away and enticed, when a school-boy, into shameful wickedness. Pale, haggard, worn and feeble, he is old before his time, and seems hastening to an early grave. Is he ashamed? Does he mourn his folly? Has he repented and sought mercy? It may be that he has not; but that, on the contrary, his heart is hardened, and his conscience "seared with a hot iron." Take care, young reader, how you venture to disregard the first intimations of your conscience that you are going wrong, for nothing is more true than that, generally,

"Sinners that grow old in sin
Are hardened in their crimes."

It may be that you *have* given way to the seductions of some bad, bold companion. Is it so? Listen, then, to the voice that calls you

to return—the voice of Divine mercy and compassion: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”—“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;” and “the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” Isa. i. 18: 1 John i. 7–9.

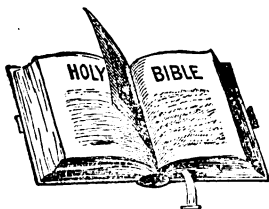
“Return then, wanderer, to thy home,
Thy Father calls for thee;
No longer now an exile roam,
In guilt and misery:
Return! return!

“Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
’Tis Jesus calls for thee;
The Spirit and the bride say, Come.
Oh, now for refuge flee:
Return! return!

“Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
’Tis madness to delay;
There are no pardons in the tomb,
And brief is mercy’s day:
Return! return!”

And Bardour—what became of him? *This* became of him: he soon cast off every remaining restraint, banished every virtuous affection, and became a slave to his own vices. In his future life was shown the baneful effects of

those principles of which, in youthful vanity, he had boasted, which "leaving nothing above us to excite awe, nor around us to awaken tenderness, wage war with heaven and with earth—whose first object is to dethrone God, whose next is to destroy man."



IV.

MANSFIELD.

MANSFIELD, the young Cumbrian's friend, was a noble boy, though by no means faultless. Perhaps he did not, in every respect and at all times, seem amiable, for his manners were now and then rough, and his temper was occasionally uncertain. He was ardent; his ardour made him sometimes impetuous, and his impetuosity sometimes also, (not generally,) led him to disregard—no, not to disregard, but to lose sight, for a moment, of the feelings of others, and drove him from the right line of propriety. Nevertheless, Mansfield was a noble fellow. He was, probably, guilty of more foolish actions, openly and undisguisedly, than many of his school-fellows; but never was he known to be guilty of a mean one. His folly, such as it was, might involve him in difficulties, but he never tried to get out of them by unworthy means.

In nothing did Mansfield's character more brightly and steadily shine than in his utter contempt of falsehood. "I have known him and watched him during the last seven years,"

said his master, after the boy had left school, "and I never knew him, by word or action, attempt to deceive me." Another fine trait in Mansfield's character was generosity; that generosity which acknowledges and makes amends for a fault, protects the weaker from the oppression of the stronger, and gives up the wish or the will of self to gratify the wish or will of another. Mansfield never seemed to think, or to act upon the thought, "I must take care of number one;" but he did often take care of number two, three, four, or five, as the case might be.

A boy who dares always to speak the truth, to take the part of the oppressed, and to deny himself, must have a great deal of moral courage, and well deserves to be called noble. Do you not think so, young reader?

Yes, yes, you cannot doubt it; and you think—come, a penny for your thoughts, as you sometimes say to your school-fellows—perhaps—

A penny! Ah, you cannot sell them so cheap. Well, let us guess them.

You think that you yourself have in you some of the stuff of which heroes are made; and that you, too, on any fitting occasion, could act very nobly in the way of speaking the truth fearlessly, enduring patiently, forgiving injuries generously, and protecting the injured bravely. Only such opportunities of distin-

guishing yourself do not often happen, and it is "a great bore" to be always looking out for them; so that, when they do present themselves, they slip by unawares, and leave you as they found you—much like all the rest of your school-fellows.

Come now, be honest. Would you not like to be a young hero if you had the chance? And do you not sometimes regret that you never had it in your power to do *some great thing* to prove your right to that title?

Ah, young friend, you will never be a hero if you think after this manner. No one is a true hero, or truly noble, who seeks to be so only for the sake of distinguishing himself. Nor is it in great deeds only that true heroism is shown. No, no; there are every-day heroes who have never dreamed of being heroes at all; and among the most truly noble are some who had not the least idea of having ever done any thing to deserve so honourable a title.

Do you not remember the words of our Lord, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me?" Those who do this in a right spirit are the true heroes, after all; and to them every day brings with it some fresh test of heroism.

"If, in our daily course, our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

"Such is the bliss of souls serene,
When they have sworn, and steadfast mean,
Counting the cost, in all to espy
Their God—in all themselves deny.

"Oh could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise!
How would our hearts with wisdom talk
Along life's dullest, dreariest walk!

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

Ay, it is in "the trivial round and common task" that boys, as well as men, are generally called upon to show true heroism; and unless they prove themselves noble in these little matters, when there is no fame nor praise to be got by it, they may never do it all, since they may wait in vain for those *great occasions* of which they sometimes dream—even at mid-day.

We cannot tell how far our old school-fellow, Mansfield, was influenced by a right spirit in all that he did amiably and lovelily. In after years, I think, he would look back with sorrow even on that part of his life which had appeared to those around him to be the least faulty, and feel that he had then, perhaps, been proud of his generosity, moral courage, and self-government, like the Pharisee, of whom we read that he thanked God he was not as other men. He would be very likely to remember that then he

sought and valued the praise and good opinion of his parents and teachers and school-fellows, and thought much more of that than he did about pleasing God.

No, we cannot tell, for it is God alone who searches the heart. Mansfield had been trained by Christian parents to admire and to imitate Christian virtues; he had had set before him Christian examples; and so far had this been of service to him that he did not depart from the way in which it was right he should go—that is, in his outward conduct. And assuredly he had reason to bless God as long as he lived for the pains which had been taken with him while young, and for the prayers to God for him which had accompanied every precept and effort. In after years, by the powerful teaching of God's Holy Spirit, he came to see more and more clearly that no virtue of our own can make us perfect and accepted before God; but that the breach of a single law of the holy and just God requires a sacrifice for sin, such as none but He could provide, and such as he has provided in the death and righteousness of his dear Son. And then, if Mansfield had ever before relied on his own good deeds, he gladly and eagerly cast away such a false hope of mercy and eternal life, to lay hold of the hope set before us in the gospel.

No, we cannot tell how it was, in this matter, with Mansfield, when he was a boy; nor perhaps

could he, at that time, have told how it was with himself. There were motives, no doubt, of which he might not be entirely aware, which led him generally to do what was right and honourable. But it is likely that these were not the best, and highest, and holiest motives. There are persons in the world, sometimes to be met with, who do much that seems right and good, but whose motives are far from being holy, and whose hearts are really at enmity against God. Their pride rises against Him, and they turn away in scorn or dislike from his love and mercy as revealed to us in the gospel. They will not yield themselves to his perfect law, and his gracious plan of salvation.

This is a fearful state to be in, young reader; and let us warn all our friends against the fatal error of believing that any lovely and amiable traits of character which may appear in them will serve them instead of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour. If we had never sinned, we might indeed be very bold. Then we would not need mercy. But we have sinned, and for sinners only one way of mercy is provided. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

While, therefore, to act justly and kindly, and honourably and nobly toward our fellow-

creatures should ever be our earnest desire and endeavour—and while neglecting this we give sad proof of a depraved nature and an unchanged, unsanctified heart—it is nevertheless a fatal mistake to rest satisfied there.

Well then, young reader, we would have you to be heroic and magnanimous and noble; but we would have you to be so on good, firm, *Christian* principles, and from right *Christian* motives. Every thing will be unsatisfactory without these principles and motives. It was so at this time with Mansfield.

“It is too bad! I say it is rank favouritism,” said Mansfield, impetuously; “and I won’t bear it. I don’t care about losing my place in the class, but I do not like being served in this way.”

“A bad mark for Mansfield!” said the teacher, quietly, to the monitor who, that day, kept the mark book.

“A bad mark, sir! Why am I to have a bad mark, Mr. Harpur?” asked Mansfield, with still increased impetuosity.

“For behaving improperly and speaking disrespectfully: now go to your desk.”

The boy obeyed; but a flame of resentment was lighted up in his eye which was not immediately to subside. He fancied he had been unjustly treated.

Half an hour afterward the head-master entered the school-room, and, very quickly, Mansfield was standing before him. His cheek was still burning with indignation.

"If you please, sir, I wish to speak to you, if you are not busy."

"By all means, Mansfield: what have you to say?"

"Mr. Harpur, sir, has treated me very unjustly," said the boy, almost passionately.

"Indeed! I am surprised to hear that," replied Mr. D——, gravely; "but, from your present appearance and manner of address, I doubt whether you can properly judge of this matter. But let me hear your complaint."

"It was in the writing class, sir," said Mansfield, commencing his explanation, but in a more subdued and respectful tone; "and my copy was better written than most in the class;—at least, sir,"—hesitating a little, "I am sure it was as well written as any; but Mr. Harpur had me put down all but at the bottom, sir,—last but one."

"Well?"

"And when I complained of the injustice, sir, he gave me a bad mark."

"Well, Mansfield," the master repeated drily, "any thing more?"

"No, sir; only I am sure Mr. Harpur did it out of spite to me; and—and—" continued Mansfield, warming afresh, "he snatched the

book away from me, as if—as if—like a dog, sir.”

“Did Mr. Harpur take the book from you with his mouth, Mansfield?”

“No, sir, I did not mean that; but—but, sir, he did it very rudely.”

“Mansfield,” said Mr. D—— gravely, “I perceive you are in a very ill temper—an unusually ill temper for you; and you are not, at present, capable either of thinking or speaking correctly. If you were in this mood in the class, I do not wonder that Mr. Harpur placed a bad mark against your name. I only wonder that you had not two. You may go now, I will speak to you again presently.”

Mansfield went very disconsolately to his desk; and presently he was called up again.

“Now, Mansfield,” said his tutor, “you are, I trust, a little cooler, and can speak rationally. Be so good as to re-state your grievance.”

The boy did so.

“And what do you wish me to do?”

“If you would be so kind, sir, as to look at the copies, and see if I deserved to be put so low in the class.”

“Most assuredly I shall not do that, sir,” replied Mr. D——. “You ask me to insult a gentleman, after having yourself insulted him by your ebullition of temper.”

“It is wrong, sir, in Mr. Harpur to say that I insulted him.”

“Mr. Harpur does not say so. I have not spoken to him on the subject. I judge by your own showing that you did so. If I had not confidence in Mr. Harpur, or if I could think him capable of exercising the spite of which you have very improperly accused him, he would not be your teacher: but my confidence in that gentleman is not to be shaken by the petulance of a boy. As to your appeal to me to revise Mr. Harpur’s decision, why, if I were to submit myself thus to the direction of my pupils, and encourage them to set up their judgment against that of properly qualified teachers, I should have enough to do. You forget your position, and that you should not presume to dictate to them in this manner.

“You have forgotten yourself strangely, Mansfield,” continued Mr. D——, “and shown great disrespect to Mr. Harpur. Had any one told me, an hour ago, that you would have shown such bad temper, I should not have believed it; and when you have recovered your senses you will be ashamed of yourself. Go now to your work, and let me see no more of this spirit in you.”

Mansfield withdrew; but he still thought himself ill used, and, through all the morning, he was sullen and disrespectful. Noon came, and a group of friends gathered around him.

“Your’s *was* the best copy in the class, or

one of the best," said one, "and it was spite in Mr. Harpur."

"It was a shame in Mr. D—— to take Mr. Harpur's part as he did," said another.

"Never mind, Mansfield," said a third; "I am glad you showed such spirit."

Mansfield said nothing; but walked toward the farther part of the spacious playground.

"Mansfield, you will play with us, won't you?" was shouted from a party in the centre of the ground, who wanted one to make up the right number.

"I cannot just now," replied he, and passed on.

"Mansfield, do help me with this horrid Cæsar," said another, in a doleful tone, from one of the benches, as he passed. "I have got fifty lines to translate before Saturday, and I am stuck fast: a stupid old freebooter, with his commentaries!"

"I am busy just now, William. I'll help you this evening, if you want any help then."

"Oh, thank you, that will do; but, I say, I'll tell you how you may be even with old Harpur—and serve him right, too."

"Oh, never mind about that. I cannot wait now."

"Mansfield," cried out a third, when he had advanced a little farther, "I have got to write home to day."

"Well, Harry, what then?"

"Oh, you know how I hate letter-writing; do come and give me a few notions—I know you will."

"Another time, another time; come to me after school this afternoon, and we will talk it over."

"Mansfield—Mansfield:" everybody seemed to want Mansfield at that moment; but at last he found himself alone.

Mansfield was in the habit, occasionally, of communing with his own heart; and he did so now. Walking to and fro, apart and out of sight, he struggled, wrestled, and gained a victory over himself; the noblest victory man or boy can obtain. Who shall say how painful was the conflict?

The afternoon work had begun—the master at his desk, the teachers at their's, the boys at their's. Again and again Mansfield glanced his eye toward the former. Will he have courage to carry out his intention?

"It must be done, and it shall be done." The resolution was formed, and the next minute he was standing by the master.

"What do you say, Mansfield?" asked Mr. D——, looking rather coldly at him.

"Sir," said Mansfield, "I behaved very badly this morning, and I wish to ask your pardon, and Mr. Harpur's."

Well done, Mansfield! Noble Mansfield! It cost him an effort, though; and the tear in his

eye, and the lip that trembled in spite of his brave tone and words, told of it.

"I am glad to hear you say so, Mansfield," said the master, looking pleased, and shaking hands cordially with him. "I was sure you would think better of it, though I could scarcely expect *this*, even from you. And I can answer for Mr. Harpur. Go to him, he wants to see you; and he will explain why he placed you so low in the class this morning. He would have told you at the time had you not been so impetuous."

"What a sneaking fellow!" said one of the boys afterward;—"what a sneaking fellow, that Mansfield!—to go creeping up the master's sleeve in that way. I should be ashamed to curry favour so."

"What a noodle!" said another; "what a noodle—that Mansfield! Would I have turned tail in that sort of way? I thought he had more spirit than to go confessing and begging pardon and such stuff!—all his own doing, too. They will never catch *me* making such an ass of myself."

"What a noble fellow is that Mansfield!" said Mr. Harpur to Mr. Weston, on the same day. "There are few boys who would have submitted to such self-mortification as he has. He is a noble fellow."

"What a fuss about nothing!" says a modern schoolboy. "Call this a story? Would.

I have read it if I had known what it would be about! *I* call it 'much ado about nothing.' And Mansfield was noble, was he, because he was put out of temper, and afterward confessed it, and begged pardon? Why, any boy could have done that."

Stop, young friend. *Would* every boy have done it? Would you? Well, the next time you commit a fault, or are guilty of a folly—
TRY.



V.

TEMPTATION AND CONQUEST.

MANSFIELD left school, passed through an apprenticeship, and at twenty-five years of age, or thereabouts, was the proprietor of a small business in the country town in which, at a later period of his life we have spoken of him as a prosperous tradesman.

At this time, however, his circumstances were far from prosperous. He had embarked the very limited capital he possessed in a business which sadly disappointed his hopes, though, happily, it did not damp his energy. It is a wearing, harassing occupation for an active young man to stand, day after day, behind the counter, waiting for customers who will not come, and tossing about merchandise which he cannot dispose of; feeling himself, all the while, entangled in responsibilities which daily accumulate, and out of which he can see no mode of extrication. This was Mansfield's position.

"Hope on, hope ever;" "Hope humbly, hope always;" "Never despair:" these are good mottoes in their way; and Mansfield tried

to make the best of them. He would not despair; he would hope; but he could not keep his heart from aching, when, night after night, after his shop shutters were put up, he sat tired with doing nothing in his scantily furnished parlour, or retired to his bed-room, sadly pondering over his gloomy and uncertain prospects.

Mansfield's situation was all the more irksome from the fact of his being almost a stranger in the place. He had lived but a little while in the town, and had made but few acquaintances,—to say nothing of friendships, which the reader may perhaps know are very different things. He had, therefore, no one to advise him, or to encourage him, excepting Rachel—dear Rachel.

Rachel was Mansfield's sister, the same who had helped him in his boyhood to learn the multiplication table, and who now—his house-keeper and only companion—helped him to persevere and struggle on. Sometimes, when poor Mansfield's spirits were most drooping, Rachel would persuade him to leave his shop in the care of his only assistant, and walk with her quite away into the fields, or by the river side. And then, forgetting his troubles for a little while, Mansfield would be induced to talk of the days of his childhood, or of old school times, and of other things besides, and returned refreshed and strengthened.

It was in itself no pleasant change for Rachel

Mansfield to take up her abode in a close and somewhat dark dwelling, in a narrow, crowded street, in a town where she and her brother were so little known, instead of living in the country, and being surrounded by old and loving friends. But had it been still more irksome to her, she would willingly have borne it for her brother's sake, and to be useful to him. Ah! these kind and self-denying sisters are great blessings in the world.

Mansfield was grateful to his sister; and his gratitude was shown in many little matters which some young men would never have thought of. Sometimes, too, when hope was at its highest, after a particularly encouraging day of business, perhaps, he would lay many a plan for rewarding, in future days, the care and goodness of his sister Rachel.

There was something else, however, which, in addition to these alleviations, and more than anything besides, enabled Mansfield to keep up a good degree of courage amid all his discouragements: he loved the Bible, and he loved prayer. He had the true recipe for cheerfulness—HE WAS A CHRISTIAN. Some years before he knew much about the cares of business, Mansfield had been dissatisfied with himself, with his pleasures, and with all the world. And yet, some might have said, he had much with which he might have been satisfied. The approbation of the wise; the

love of the good; cheerful companions; industrious and persevering habits; health and moderation; a business training which suited his inclination—all these, with many other helps to happiness, were his. But still he was dissatisfied. One thing more was wanting; and that one thing was “the love of God shed abroad in his heart.”

For a time, he neglected the invitations of God’s word, and the gentle but powerful strivings of the Holy Spirit, and his uneasiness increased. But, at length, by the grace and mercy of God, he was enabled to yield, and he gave his heart, his affections, to Christ; took Christ’s “yoke” upon him, and learned of Him. Then his disquietude vanished. From that time, Mansfield had known much, and enjoyed much, of the spirit of that most faithful declaration, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.” Isa. xxvi. 3.

Not that Mansfield expected, because he was a Christian, to pass through life without trouble of some kind or other; he knew better than this: but he did expect, he trusted, he believed, that even trials would be sanctified and made blessings; and he rested upon the promise of God, who says of every child of his, “Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon

me, and I will answer him : I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and honour him." Ps. xci. 14, 15. It was this trust in God which gave courage to Mansfield, as it has done to thousands besides, to face his difficulties cheerfully and without murmuring. And to you, readers—schoolboys as you are now, but men as you will be soon, should your lives be spared, and men struggling, perhaps, with life's difficulties—to you do we say, " Oh taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in him." Ps. xxxiv. 8.

At a time when Mansfield's difficulties in business seemed to gather fast, and when his hopes were at the lowest, an event occurred which promised to change the current of affairs. An old lady, his relation, to whom Mansfield was what is called *heir-at-law*, died suddenly, and no will could be found. Now Mrs. Simmons—cousin Jane, as she was familiarly called—was a strange-tempered old lady ; and, having taken offence at something said or done by her relations, she had rejected all further communication with them, and declared that none of the Mansfields should ever inherit any part of her property. At the same time it was known that she did cause a will to be made which was duly signed, and by which her whole property was left to a stranger who had recently made her acquaintance ; and had, as was believed, persuaded her to this unkind and

wrong course, and kept up in her mind those bitter feelings.

Nevertheless, when cousin Jane died, greatly to the surprise of all concerned, no will could be found; and, after many a strict and persevering but vain search, from cellar to garret, of the large old farm house in which she had lived, it was concluded that, in a moment of repentance, the old maiden lady had destroyed the unjust will, with the intention, perhaps, of making another, which intention she had not found time nor opportunity to fulfil.

Very much enraged was Mr. Thomson, the expectant legatee, at this disappointment of his hopes: but there was no help for it; and, as Mansfield was really the best entitled to the inheritance, he very properly and righteously entered into its possession.

It was, doubtless, a great relief to Mansfield's mind, whatever degree of regret he felt at the death of his relation, to find himself thus unexpectedly released from the cares and anxieties of an unsuccessful business. But he did not act ungenerously toward the disappointed expectant; or rather, he behaved very generously, for it was to be considered that Mr. Thomson had no natural claim to the property of "cousin Jane."

Not to puzzle the reader with a long explanation of the distinction which is made in law between what is called *real* property and

personal property, we need only say that, by the law in force there, all of the former description, of which there was much, belonged to Mansfield, as heir-at-law; and that all of the latter, of which there was little, had to be shared between himself and his sister Rachel. This was accordingly done; and after some needful delay, and when all legal forms had been observed, the brother and sister took possession of what they and everybody else believed to be righteously and lawfully their own.

A FEW months afterwards, Mansfield's circumstances were greatly improved. He had removed from his former house into larger and more desirable business-premises in another part of the town; and his business was greatly increased, so that he had no longer any temptation to fret at the absence of customers. Rachel remained with him as housekeeper; but a new prospect had opened to them both, against which they had previously, with strong resolution, shut their eyes—they each looked forward to marriage.

Mansfield's accession to property, and the change in his position, had introduced him to new connections: he could no longer regret being unknown and unaccompanied. Wealth draws many friends.

As to his recently acquired inheritance, as Mansfield had wisely determined not to relin-

quish a business to which he had been brought up, he had arranged to let the farm, and was on the point of doing so, having previously sold by auction much of the stock and furniture which had descended jointly to himself and his sister. Thus far, then, all was smiling; the sunshine of prosperity was full upon him.

One evening, a countryman entered Mansfield's shop, and, saying that he wanted a word in private, was ushered into the counting-house.

"Well, my friend," said Mansfield, "what may be your business?"

The man took from his pocket a small parcel, and laid it down. "You don't know me, I dare say," said he; "but that is no matter. I bought some things at old Madam Simmon's sale."

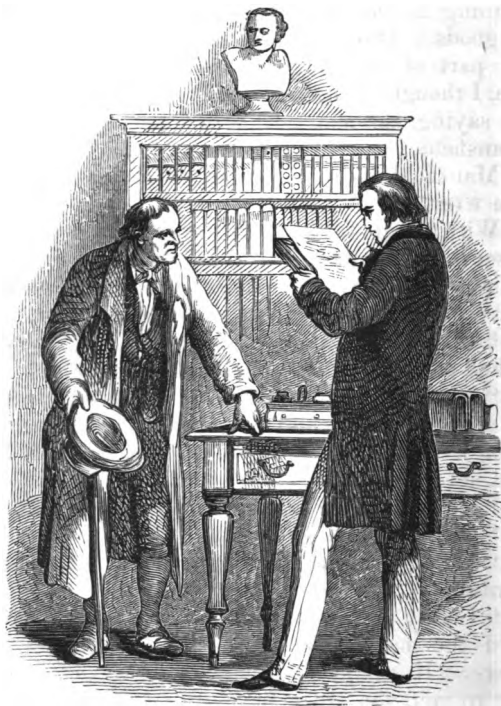
"Yes, I think I remember you now. I hope you were satisfied with your bargain."

"Oh yes; as to that, I need not complain. I bought a bed and bedstead, and a lot of crockery, and some chairs, and so on; and an old—I don't know justly what to call it; it was a set of drawers, like—very old-fashioned."

"Yes, I recollect: it was a cabinet."

"Ay, that's what it was called on the bill. Well, sir, the long and short of it is, when we were getting the things home, this cabinet got a smash, and was knocked pretty near all to bits; and in putting it together again, *this* dropped out. Where it came from I can't

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Mansfield opened it—it was the will.

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say; for I could have been positive there was nothing in the drawers when I bought the bit of goods. However, here it is; and as it was no part of my bargain, and did not concern me, I thought I might as well bring it up here." So saying, the man pushed the packet toward Mansfield.

Mansfield opened it—glanced at it: it was the WILL.

With what feelings the young tradesman discovered the nature of this communication it is not necessary to surmise: our business is not with what he *felt*, but with what he *did*.

"Do you know what this paper is?" he asked of the man, as calmly as he was able.

"No, sir: to tell the truth, I am not much of a scholar, and can't read writing at all; and then I thought it was no business of mine, so I did not look into it."

"And have you shown it to any one else?"

"Certainly not, sir. Nobody has seen it."

"You probably, however, guess what it contains?"

"I may have my own thoughts about it," said the man; "but that's neither here nor there. If the paper, whatever it is, is of any use to you, you are welcome to it: if you like to pay me for my trouble of bringing it, well and good; and if it is of no use, why, you can put it in the fire at once, and there will be an end of it."

"I will get you to wait a little while, my friend," said Mansfield, still calmly : " this is a matter which cannot be disposed of by us two." Thus saying, he wrote two hasty notes, dispatched them, and then invited the countryman into his parlour. In a few minutes a neighbour, with Mansfield's sister and his solicitor, were added to the conference.

In a few days, it was rumoured, and the rumour soon became a certainty, that Mansfield had lost the inheritance to which he had succeeded, and that he was a ruined man. And—

"Did you ever hear of such a piece of Quixotism?" asked one townsman of another, during the prevalence of the " nine days' wonder." "Why, as I have been told, Mansfield no sooner set his eyes on the will—which, by the way, he might have destroyed if he had pleased, and nobody would have been the wiser—than he called in his lawyer, and they together sent off, post haste, to old Thomson, to let him know all about it. At any rate, I would have taken care of myself, and made a good bargain of it, before giving up the will. And, as to that, there would not have been much harm, in my way of thinking, if the will had gone into the fire. Who has the best right to the property, I should like to know? But Mansfield is one of the queer ones, they say; and so is his sister: and if people will be fools, they must."

Many such speeches were uttered, and some blamed, some laughed, some sighed, and some praised. Meanwhile, quietly and peacefully, though it may be with some natural depression of spirits, Mansfield and his sister went on their course. They gave up, at once, their late possessions according to the tenor of "cousin Jane's" will; and were ungenerously harassed by the new owner on account of that part of it which had been sold, or otherwise expended. As far as they were able, they met his demands: but not satisfied with this, he threatened them with law. Then came the breaking up of Mansfield's business, and the utter frustration of his hopes of conjugal happiness. He had to begin the world afresh, "and that with nothing—no, not a penny of his own:" so said his neighbour; but this was a mistake.

Not with nothing! He had great riches—peace of mind, a conscience void of offence, and God's love and approbation. Are these nothing, young reader?

And he prospered. Worldly prosperity often brings a load of trouble with it: but it brought none to Mansfield, for it was accompanied by that "blessing which maketh rich," and to which God "addeth no sorrow." Prov. x. 22.

Young friend, if you would have God's blessing, you, too, must be prepared to hold fast

integrity and a good conscience at all cost. Probably, indeed, you will never be exposed to a trial so severe as that of which you have just read; but you will not pass through life,—depend upon it,—without having your honest and honourable principles put to the test. How do you think you will be able to stand it?

Ah, perhaps you say, it will be time enough to find out that when the time comes.

Well, time enough to find it out may be, but not time enough to prepare for the trial. No, no: you must prepare for that *now*. If you are not heroic and courageous enough now to do what is right because it is right, what can be expected of you when the stern and hard trials and temptations of life come on? Why, this is to be expected—you will fall before them.

Christian principle!—that is the best and only true safeguard against every kind of temptation; the only armour that is *proof*. “Take unto you,” then, young readers, “the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

Do you ask what this armour is? Why, there is the breastplate of righteousness, and the shield of faith, the girdle of truth, and the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and prayer, and watchfulness, and peace. Eph. vi. 11—18. This is the armour in which, by the help of

God's Holy Spirit, you will be "able to stand against the wiles of the devil," and the strong temptations which may assail you.

We do not know what our old school-fellow Mansfield would have done without this armour; but we do know that life abounds with circumstances calculated to manifest what are the real principles of most persons; and wherever there is a desire of glorifying God, the transactions of every day will yield opportunity for doing so; as they will also afford means for serving self and the world.

Christian principle!—but how to get Christian principle? Is that your question, young friend? Listen, then, to Him who says, and says to you, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Learn of ME.

Yes, learn of Jesus, and then one simple and all-sufficient reason will urge you on, and strengthen you for a continuance in well-doing, and brace you in every unexpected emergency: I cannot do this wrong; I must not do this wrong; by God's help, I will not do this wrong; for I "serve the Lord Christ."

VI.

THE GENERAL ILLUMINATION.

AN illumination and a holiday—an illumination in the town, and a holiday at school! Cause and effect; the effect, however, preceding the cause: there was a holiday at school in the day, because there was to be a grand illumination in the town at night. Why there was to be an illumination is but of little consequence; it might have been an occasion of a political triumph, or some other public event. ♦

A long walk after breakfast; then, after dinner, marbles in the playground, for marbles were *in*. We might wish that some other game more athletic and attended with fewer evil associations and effects had been chosen. But perhaps our young friends had some way of avoiding what is objectionable and securing only a healthful excitement.

Of all the marble players of that day, Robinson was the best shot. He could single out a marble from the ring, or strike, with unerring aim, the taw of an opponent at a distance of three paces; and at six he rarely

missed On that particular afternoon, his skill shone more conspicuously than ever, and he was proportionably elated.

Superior ability, however, whether in the games of schoolboys or the more important pursuits of manhood, has its disadvantages; and Robinson's opponents dropped off, one by one, tired of being perpetually beaten. "It is of no use to play with *him*," said they; "there is no chance of winning a single game." At length, he was left alone in his glory.

Robinson was modest. He disclaimed all personal excellence, and depreciated his own skilful performances. It was not that he could shoot with a marble better than any other boy; this was not the cause of his winning every game, he said: but he had the happiness of possessing a most valuable "blood alley;" and all the merit was in his alley, and not in himself. It was a perfect sphere, this same alley, he said, and therefore it went so straight to the mark; it was also the exact size which suited his knuckle. According to his account of it, this alley seemed almost to be endowed with consciousness, and to act in concert with the mind and will of its owner. Besides all this, "it was a perfect beauty, quite a *love* of a marble, so regularly veined, and so delicately tinted. It was a real blood, too." This was his style of talking about his alley.

"How much will you take for your alley?"

was asked once and again by one and another, who half believed in its vaunted and peculiar virtues.

How much! Scores of common every-day alleys would not, that afternoon, have purchased Robinson's "little fairy," as he called it.

Thus much for the holiday; now for the illumination.

It was a fine evening, and hundreds were thronging the streets, to see what was to be seen. Before the sun had set, each householder was busy in preparing the lamps or candles with which his dwelling, outside or in, was to be enlightened and enlivened. Presently, as the dusk of evening increased, lights were rapidly applied to turpentine wicks, until soon every street sparkled, from end to end, with brilliancy. On one house shone a magnificent pure white star; on another, a crown of many-coloured lamps. Here were gigantic initial letters of flame, shining through purple and gold; and there a wonderful transparency, emblematic of the event which had given rise to the general rejoicing. Some householders had contented themselves with decorating their window sills, externally, with tallow candles in candlesticks of clay, which flared and flamed and wasted (the candles, not the candlesticks) in the evening breeze. Others, more prudent and economical, illuminated their windows withinside.

It was a profitable evening, that, for oil merchants and tallow chandlers: even the poor wood sawyer, who could scarcely earn enough money to buy daily bread; the mechanic out of work; the widowed wash-woman, with a large young family to support—these, and dozens besides, while sorely grudging the waste, added, by their rows of lighted candles, to the splendour of that general illumination.

The excited schoolboys, however, (who accompanied by one of their teachers, lest they should get into mischief, increased the throng of street-gazers that night,) had little thought for such matters, and found enough to admire in every bright and shining device that met their eyes.

Presently, turning the corner of a street, our schoolboys found themselves in a thicker crowd, facing a large house which was not lighted up. Very gloomy and frowning seemed that mansion amidst its gay and brilliant neighbours; and very wroth was the crowd with the owner of that house for the strange perverseness he showed.

“He deserves to have his windows broken,” said one.

“So he will,” replied another, “before the night is out.”

“A stingy fellow!” exclaimed a third.

“He is not stingy; he belongs to the opposition,” said a fourth.

"More shame to him!" shouted a fifth: "he *ought* to have his windows broken."

And probably, ere this, the gentleman's windows would have been broken, had not the people in the crowd known that police officers were placed in front of the house, ready to pounce upon the first who should throw a stone.

"Pass on, boys, as quickly as you can," said Mr. Weston, the teacher, "and let us get out of the crowd:" and accordingly the boys passed on.

"Why is not that house illuminated, sir?" asked one of the boys of his teacher.

"I believe, for one thing," replied Mr. Weston, "the gentleman who lives in it thinks that a general illumination is a very foolish waste of money, and therefore he sets his face against this evening's public rejoicings: and I think his opinion is correct. Then, for another thing, you heard one of the men say that Mr. Martin—for that is the gentleman's name—belongs to the opposition: that is, he thinks differently from those who have ordered the general illumination, and does not consider that there is any cause for rejoicing of any kind; and therefore, also, he chooses not to light up his house."

This explanation did not entirely satisfy some of our schoolboys. "A pretty fellow, this Mr. Martin," thought they, "to set up

his judgment against all the world. So he would not have had an illumination, eh? And then we should have lost this grand sight, and our holiday into the bargain."

"He *does* deserve to have his windows broken, *I* think," said one.

"I should just like to have a chance at them," whispered another.

"We must go back that way again," said a third, significantly: and so, for that time, the subject was dropped.

A larger crowd than before was assembled in front of Mr. Martin's house, when the boys, returning from sight-seeing, were going home-wards; and it was by no means a quiet crowd. Some were shouting, some hissing, some were abusing the officers who kept watch and ward.

"Keep on the pavement, and go on as fast as you can," said Mr. Weston.

But they could not go fast, had they wished, and the boys did not particularly wish to go fast. It was good fun: and when they were just opposite the dark house, they stood still for more than a minute, waiting for a clearer passage.

There was one boy in that group who, had he been noticed, would have been seen to slip his hand into his pocket, draw it out again—put it in again—draw it out again, and then look stealthily round with a very red face. At length, had he been very closely watched, a

small marble would have been seen between his finger and thumb, held very tight, and nervously worked to and fro.

"Now then, my boys," said Mr. Weston, "there is room for you to pass: be quick."

The next minute a sharp sound of broken glass was heard; and the marble had disappeared.

"Hallo! there goes one window to begin with," exclaimed a voice from the crowd.

"Who did that?" shouted one of the officers, rushing forward: "it was one of those boys, I know;" and he was about to lay hands on one of them at a venture.

"Nonsense, my good man," said Mr. Weston, "I have been close by them all the time, and not one of them lifted a hand, I am certain."

"Well, Mr. Weston," replied the man, who knew the teacher, "I believe you; else I did fancy the stone came from hereabouts. This is a queer sort of job, sir; I wish it was over:" and he returned to his station, just in time to hear the crash of another pane of glass, and to lay hands on the man by whom the stone was thrown. Then there was a rush, a rescue, and a fierce fight between police and mob, ending in more broken windows, some broken heads, and the committal, next morning, of three or four rioters to prison. Meanwhile the boys reached home, pleased with the fun, and only

School Days Revisited.



The visitor was plainly, but neatly dressed. p. 139.

regretting that general illuminations were so rare.

On the morning of the next day, the boys being seated, and busily at work at their desks—the master, accompanied by a visitor, entered the school-room, and looked gravely around him.

The visitor was a stout, pleasant-looking man, very plainly but neatly dressed.

“Who is he? Who is he?” was whispered by one to another.

There were few who knew him: but presently, at the farther desk was heard a low-toned voice, “That is Mr. Martin;” and at the sound of this name, one of the boys, our sharp-shooter, Robinson, looked rather confused, fidgetted in his seat, and then hastily began to work away most industriously at the slate before him.

“What can he be come for?” whispered a boy at Robinson’s elbow—“eh, Robinson?”

“How should I know?” replied he. “What is it to you? Why don’t you go on with your work? You will get me a bad mark presently for talking, if you don’t mind.” And again he went on with his sum.

“Boys,” said Mr. D——, after a few minutes’ ominous silence, “I wish you to form a general class.”

It was done.

“Boys,” said he again, “my friend Mr.

Martin had some of his windows broken last night; and I am sorry to say there is grave suspicion resting on one or more of you as having joined in this wanton mischief. What am I to say to this? What have you to say to it?"

No answer, but many broad stares at Mr. Martin, who stood by the master's side, with a good-humoured expression of countenance, which spoke volumes of encouragement.

"Mr. Weston tells me," continued the master, "that you were in front of this gentleman's house when a window was broken, and that one of the police charged one of you with the deed."

"Yes, sir," (one of the accused ventured to reply;) "but Mr. Weston knew that we did not do it."

"Nay, he only thought you were guiltless, as he had not seen either of you throw a stone: but he might be mistaken, you know."

"Yes, sir, he might; but—"

"Well, will any one of you acknowledge having thrown a stone, so as to break one of the windows in Mr. Martin's house?"

No answer.

"I must ask all around then. Did you? Did you?—you?—you?—you?"

"No, sir,"—"Oh no, sir,"—"Certainly not, sir,"—"I did not, indeed, sir." Thus said they all.

●

"Will you ask our young friends if either of them threw a *marble*?" said the gentleman.

"Certainly, I will. You hear boys, what my friend suggests—was a marble thrown by either of you, so as to break one of the windows?"

At mention of the word marble one of the "young friends" hung his head and seemed embarrassed; but he soon recovered himself. As before, there was no answer.

"Come, I entreat you to speak, if any one of you is conscious of having done it," said the master kindly: "it is as bad to conceal some faults as to commit them. 'Dare to be true.' Mansfield did *you* throw a marble through this gentleman's window? Alfred did you?—William?—Henry?—Albert?—Frank?"

"No, sir; indeed, sir, we know nothing about it."

"Bowler?—Nelson?—Hart?—Powel?—Robinson?"

"No, sir," said they all once more.

"They all deny it, sir," said the master, turning to the visitor.

"I am sorry for it," replied Mr. Martin, looking grave and sad; "for by the testimony of a credible witness whom I have this morning seen, and whom I will produce, if necessary, one of these boys is guilty. In the mean time," he continued, slowly putting his hand into his pocket "this may assist us in discovering the

culprit, as it is so peculiarly marked. It was found this morning on my parlour carpet, and one of the panes of glass has a hole which answers exactly to its size." Thus saying, Mr. Martin exhibited, in the broad palm of his hand, a marble.

Very startling was the effect produced by this exhibition.

"It is Robinson's alley—his shooter,—his blood alley," whispered the boys from top to bottom of the class. As to Robinson, he instinctively put his hand into his pocket, and drew out, tremblingly, a handful of marbles. His alley was not there. He coloured; then his colour went out; then tears gushed from his eyes.

"Is it yours? Or was it yours?" asked the master, sternly.

"Yes, sir." Yes, Robinson did not deny it; nor could he deny that he played with it, and won with it, the day before, and that he refused to sell or barter it away. It was in his pocket—that was clear—when the boys started on their evening excursion.

In truth, and in short, Robinson was guilty. The temptation to mischief had been too strong to be resisted—that is, he had not resisted it. The fun of sily breaking a window, joined with the idea that it would be a just punishment for the man who would not illuminate, had reached to his fingers' ends; and in the excitement of

his mischievous propensity, he had forgotten all about his "little fairy," and had sent it on the evil mission, believing it to be a marble of common stone or clay.

Poor Robinson—foolish Robinson—truthless Robinson! How he trembled, and stammered, and coloured, and became pale and coloured again, when the mischief and the guilt were brought home to him.

"But, sir, sir—O sir, it was not a lie—it was not indeed, sir, if you will but think, sir. I said, sir—I said I did not *throw* the marble, and indeed I did not, sir."

"No? How then?"

"I—I *shot it off*, sir."

"That is a mean, disgraceful, and sinful equivocation," said the master, angrily; "an equivocation of which I could have hoped not one of my pupils would have been guilty."

Robinson hung his head.

"You may well be ashamed of yourself, sir," continued the tutor; "and—"

"Allow me to interpose," said the good-humoured gentleman; "for perhaps I am in fault. I should have shown the marble at once, and then the temptation would not have been placed before this lad. The window-breaking I forgive, with all my heart; though I hope our young friends will not henceforth think it necessary or expedient to break the windows of all who do not act precisely according to their

own views of what may be right and proper. Were we all to do so," continued the friendly visitor, with a smile, "there would not be many sound panes of glass in the country, I fear. Well, that is settled, and we will shake hands over the broken window:" and Mr. Martin held out his hand to the culprit, who, timidly and with averted face, responded to the invitation.

"But the falsehood, young friend, the falsehood—for a falsehood it was—do you not feel it to have been such? that is another matter. I may forgive you, and take blame to myself for leading you into temptation; but you have grievously offended your best Friend. He has given you a tongue, but not for double-dealing: thought and wit, but not to contrive how your neighbour may be outwitted in the strife of words. Do you not think so?"

The boy made no reply; and the gentleman, still holding his reluctant hand, went on:—

"There are men as well as boys who fancy it is cunning to use the letter of truth in the spirit of falsehood; but as the Lord looketh not on the outward appearance, but at the heart, so also doth he look at the intention to deceive or mislead, and not at the words which convey the deception.

"I will not tire you by further speech," said the kind-hearted man, "except to commend to you, and all your schoolfellows, the words of honest George Herbert:— ● ●

‘Lie not, but let thy heart be true to God,
Thy mouth to it; thy actions to them both :
Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod ;
The stormy working soul spits lies and froth.
—Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lie :
A fault which needs it most, grows two thereby !

“ And now, my friend,” said the visitor, turning to the master, “ I have somewhat usurped your magisterial authority ; but I know you will pardon me, and I would fain be an advocate with you for this lad. I think he is sorry that he injured me ; and I have freely forgiven him : I trust you will forgive him also. And will you also forbear to punish, this time, the remissness in truth of which you may justly complain ? The temptation was doubtless strong ; and strong men, you know, have ere now fallen in like manner. I hope—nay, I will believe, he will be henceforth more guarded, and remember that equivocation is deceit, and that deceit is hateful to the God of truth. I think I see penitence in his eye : will you forgive him ? ”

The appeal was successful, punishment was remitted : and, after a kind farewell to the pupils, Mr. Martin was about to leave the school-room, when, darting from his seat, a little fellow ran up to him—

“ Sir, sir, may I shake hands with you ? ” and in another minute the whole school had followed his example.

Had there been a general illumination on the succeeding evening, not a schoolboy there but

would have been proud to guard the house of their friend from injury.

And now, young reader, take a lesson and a warning. Schoolboys are apt to do mischievous things foolishly and thoughtlessly, but sometimes wickedly. There is one rule which, if well regarded, would keep them from this—the golden rule of the Lord Jesus Christ: “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

But having foolishly, or thoughtlessly, or wickedly perpetrated mischief, or having, by any means, got into what you call “a scrape,” take care that you are not tempted to make the matter worse by equivocation. The word of God is plain on this point. God abhors deceit; and his plain and awful, but just and righteous declaration is, that into heaven shall never enter “any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or *maketh a lie*.” Lay these words to heart, young friend. “Value”—you will come to these words again at the end of this book; but they will bear reading twice—“Value your honour, truthfulness, and integrity. Detest every thing like duplicity and deceit. *Don't go within a mile of a lie.*”

VII.

THE BUSY BOY WHO WAS ALWAYS IDLE.

“AH! Hammond, Hammond, you are smart enough—you have talents enough—to be a shining character some of these days. I see nothing to prevent it, in the ordinary course of things, excepting one terrible drawback; you are so idle—so incorrigibly idle. If you permit *this* to grow upon you, your abilities will do you no good; they will only add to your shame. Do combat this unworthy disposition, my boy, and think that you came into the world to do earnestly what is to be done at all.”

Thus spoke the master, as the scholar stood before him, self-convicted of the fault with which he was charged, but not disposed to mend it.

Hammond *was* idle—not positively lazy, but idle; and between laziness and idleness there is a great difference. For instance, Hammond had a school-fellow whose greatest pleasure consisted in absolute inactivity, both of body and mind. He could not be roused to exert himself in any thing. Work or play, it was

all the same to Edmund. When all the rest of the boys were making the air ring with joyous shouts, and scampering, as if for a prize, Edmund was dragging slowly along

“Over the hills and far away,”

as though at least a seven pound weight of lead or iron were fastened to each of his heels. When they were, at one and the same time, tiring and strengthening themselves by hard labour in their various athletic games, he was generally stretched at full length on the grass, with eyes half shut, and mind far more than half vacant. When, with greater or less alacrity, they were preparing lessons for school, Edmund was dog's-earing his books in utter dislike of the trouble of learning.

Sometimes (perhaps generally) when boys exhibit such an utter want of interest in all that surrounds them, and such a fixed disinclination to do with all their might, or with any part of it, what they are required to perform—we must suppose that it arises, in part at least, from ill health. In such cases medical treatment is more needed than scolding and compulsion. But Edmund's ailment was spiritual, and not bodily. He was blessed with strong bones, firm flesh, a healthy skin, and a good digestion—ay, a famous digestion; but he was hopelessly slothful in mind, and his mind influenced his body. In a word, he was

one of the lazy ones of whom it has been said or sung—

“There are a number of us creep
Into this world to eat and sleep;
And know no reason why they're born,
But merely to consume the corn,
Devour the cattle, fowl, and fish,
And leave behind an empty dish.
They eat and drink and sleep, and then—
They eat and drink and sleep again.”

Such was Edmund, who was a lazy fellow; but not such, by any means, was young Hammond, who was an idle fellow, but not a lazy one.

We said that Hammond was self-convicted of his fault. He could not help feeling that, in the particular instance which had called down rebuke, he had been negligent. His lesson, whatever it was, had not been half learned, though he had plenty of time in which to learn it. But he was not disposed to admit the general accusation.

“I am sure, sir,” he said, “I have not been idle. I have not, I assure you, sir.” He said this half indignantly, half apologetically, quite respectfully, however—for he was really a free, open-hearted, and good-humoured boy—and very earnestly. “I have not been idle, I assure you, sir.”

“Then how is it that you do not know this lesson?” asked Mr. D——.

"Sir, I really did not think of it till this morning. I was so busy with other things that it slipped my memory. I ought not to have neglected it, sir; but that is how it was."

"What other things, then, have you been busy about, Hammond?"

"Oh, sir, you know there is the harbour we are building,—*that* has taken a good deal of my time; then there is the plan of the new cottage which I promised to draw for Mr. Hargraves; and then, sir, last night, I began to put fresh covers on all my books: besides these, I have done a good many other things. I do not think I have had an idle minute, sir, since this lesson was set me; I do not, indeed."

"All these are good and proper matters," replied the master; "and it may be that you have thought yourself very busily employed; but I do not withdraw my accusation. There is such a thing as busy idleness, my boy; and busy idleness is your great failing."

"There is a numerous class of people in the world," continued the kind-hearted tutor with great seriousness, "who act as you are constantly acting. They are always restlessly busy, and always, also, lamentably idle. Do you not understand how this can be?"

"No, sir," replied the boy, hesitatingly, "I cannot quite see that, sir. If a person is always at work, or always busy about something," continued Hammond, ready always to

speaking his mind, "I don't see how he *can* be called idle."

"Do you not? Now, I rather wonder at that, Hammond; you are not deficient in perception:" (Hammond brightened up at this:) "however, I will explain how it can be.

"Every man, woman, and child," continued Mr. D——, "has always a *present duty* to perform; something to do, to which all other things, for the time being, ought to be subordinate. You can understand that?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy.

"I do not know," continued the master, "that a single exception can justly be made to this rule. No—there *must* be a present duty. The statesman, the man of wealth, the professional man, the tradesman, the mechanic, the day-labourer—these, with their wives, children, and servants, (if they have them,) have all their specific daily and hourly present duties which cannot be neglected without fault. Unhappily, many do not like being bound down by this right and proper rule. Some would prefer doing nothing at all; these are the lazy ones. Others prefer doing something other than the *present duty*; and these are the idle ones."

Hammond began to catch a faint idea of his tutor's meaning; but he wished the lecture was ended. The lecturer went on, however.

"I know many men, Hammond, who have

good business or professions to which it is their duty to attend; but, being idle, they prefer doing something else—tiring themselves out in matters which ought to receive a very limited share of their attention. They are ceaselessly active, and make a great noise with their activity, but they are not the less idle. Now this is just the case with you, my boy: you forget that you have a *present duty*. It was a pleasant occupation to help build an arbour; it is very proper for you, or any one, to oblige a friend, as in the plan of a new cottage; it is right that your books should have new covers: all these matters might even have been—yes, they would have been—present duties if undertaken at the right time. But you had a higher claim in this lesson, and in thrusting that aside for occupations which had greater attractions, you were busy indeed, but only idly busy.”

“It is perpetually so with you, Hammond. All your activity of mind and body is mistimed and disjointed: and, I tell you again, unless you attain a habit of self-government, self-denial and application to one thing at a time, and that the right thing, you may be admired for the versatility of your talents, and you may also be always in a bustle; but you will do nothing well. You will raise for yourself obstacles to success in life, and will be nothing more than a laborious trifler—an idle man.

Now go, and attend to your present duty, my boy."

Glad that the lecture was ended, Hammond went to his desk, and learned his lesson. The next day he was as idle as ever, and the next, and the next.

In due time Hammond left school, not altogether unimproved, perhaps, but with the sad blemish still remaining. He was idle and desultory; he hated continuous application. In other respects he was amiable; and had not his idleness interfered and placed obstacles in the way, he would have been a promising youth.

Hammond left school with what would generally be considered good prospects. He had friends, able and willing to assist him in any profession which he might choose for himself; and that choice he was urged to make.

Some months passed away, and the choice was not yet made. He was perpetually busy, too—at least he thought so. Sometimes it was a visit he had to make; at others, it was music he had to copy; at others, he had a book to read; at others some drawings to finish;—all good and right occupations in their place, but not when they thrust out an obvious duty.

At length, when the down upon Hammond's upper lip began visibly to remind him that, try as he might, he could not always be a boy, he

made his election. He was fond of riding, and so he would be a physician.

Hammond's father shook his head rather doubtfully when this conclusion was arrived at. He knew that physicians have something more to do than to ride about for their own pleasure, and he told his son so. As, however, he hoped that a profession which demands no small amount of labour, perseverance, and self-denial would have a beneficial effect upon a youth, active enough, but neither persevering nor self-denying, he consented to the choice; and Hammond entered the office of a physician of good practice in a neighbouring town.

But Hammond soon found that, before the pleasure of scouring the country on horseback could be enjoyed, many preliminary steps had to be taken by no means agreeable to him. To stand hour after hour pounding drugs, mixing draughts, or making pills, was not only tiresome and monotonous, but produced nausea; and to attend to the dressing of cuts, bruises, and "filthy sores" was worse—it was disgusting. But there was no help for it; the premium had been paid, and Hammond was "booked," as he expressed himself.

To make amends, as far as he could, for such disagreeable employments, the doctor's young apprentice turned all his leisure time and ingenuity, and much time also that ought not to have been leisure, to other pursuits. Now, he

was inventing, or trying to invent, a machine to exhibit and illustrate the principle of perpetual motion. Then, giving this up in despair, he expended much time and trouble in teaching a pet magpie to talk intelligible English. He joined a choral society, a boating club, and a lodge of "odd-fellows," in each of which, or in all of which combined, he learned, as a matter of course almost, to smoke cigars, and to drink,—as his own particular toast,—confusion to gal-lipots and phials.

Now all this might be very entertaining, but it was evidently as much out of place as it was wrong. Thus, as when a boy at school, Hammond had the knack of devoting his energies to any thing rather than the "present duty," so did he also as a medical student. When, therefore, the term of studies expired, he knew a little of many things not particularly useful, or, at least, not at all likely to be useful to him; but with the profession in which he was expected to rise he had made but a very slight acquaintance.

He had, moreover, formed friendships, or what he called such; and among the loungers with whom too much of his time had been spent was a young man as restless for want of occupation, as Hammond was in spite of it. He had the happiness, or unhappiness, of being rich.

This friend (Harvey Brown) made his appearance at the house of Hammond's father, one

day, soon after the young student had left the scene of his studies.

"Hammond," said he, "I mean to travel. Will you go with me?"

"To travel! Where?"

"Anywhere. I am bored with doing nothing, and must see something of life:—France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland—one or all, it makes no difference to me. Will you go?"

Hammond shook his head. "I cannot; I must be off to the city—the stupid hospitals! Wish I could, though; but—"

"Pshaw! the hospitals won't run away. Give them the slip for a year."

"I would give them the slip forever, if I could," replied Hammond; "but it won't do. I must scramble through the world somehow. Besides, travelling costs money; and—"

"That's my concern. I pay all costs; so now, once more,—will you go?"

The temptation was too strong for Hammond to resist. He obtained the reluctant consent of his father, who told him that time, to him, was money, and in less than a month the two young men were in France.

Two years passed before Hammond found his way home again; and then all thoughts of completing his professional studies had vanished.

"But what will you do?" argued his father,

in deep perplexity. "Consider what an expense your education has been to me ; and I am not rich, like Harvey Brown. You cannot live on nothing."

"It would be throwing good money after bad," said the young man : "it would—depend upon it. I shall never make a doctor : I am not cut out for it."

"I am afraid you are right," replied the anxious parent. "I wonder what you are cut out for. Well, what do you think of doing?"

"Why, sir, I have thoughts of land-surveying. It would just suit me, I know. I wish I had thought of it sooner. But it is never too late to learn. And, indeed, I have been studying lately, and—"

"Land-surveying !" exclaimed the father, cutting Hammond short in his explanations : "and have you considered, sir, that you are now a man ? And after what your medical education has cost, do you suppose I should be justified in indulging you in this freak ? Think, my son ; be sensible for once in your life."

"I was never more sensible than I am now," replied Hammond. "Only think, father, and reckon. *You* know pretty well what it would cost to get me through the hospital work ; to say nothing of what more it would cost to buy me a practice afterward, and to say nothing either of the risk of innumerable homicides, and all that unpleasant kind of thing. Now one

year in a surveyor's office, would give me a start, and would be less expensive. After that I would shift for myself."

This logic prevailed, and Hammond soon afterward again left home.

We could follow Hammond step by step almost, through many succeeding years of his life; but a sketch only was intended, and we forbear. He is now hard upon forty years of age, and has been many things in turn, and nothing long. Every new scheme has involved fresh expense; and he is now poor in purse, and poor in reputation. He liked land-surveying as little as he liked medicine; then he became a farmer, and after the loss of half his capital, grew tired of the monotony of an agricultural life, and embarked in commerce. From commerce he turned to manufacture; and from one branch of manufacture to another; and has verified the proverb, strikingly applicable to such as he, "The thoughts of every one that is hasty tend only to want." Prov. xxi. 5. He now talks of gathering together the scanty remnants of his former possessions, and seeking on another part of the world's surface that prosperity which has here eluded his grasp. But unless he resolutely turn over a new leaf, and banish or overcome that real, genuine idleness, which, restless and bustling as it may seem, ever neglects present duty for subordinate pursuits, and fancies ever some

untold advantage in perpetual change, it is to be feared that even this last resort will fail.

Schoolboys, there is a moral to this sketch That moral has already been read. But it has a still deeper, sadder application. Many a one more wise than Hammond in that worldly diligence which "tends to plenteousness" is yet supremely foolish in the affairs of eternity. Neglecting the *ever present duty* of seeking "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," he suffers himself to be drawn aside by every passing toy, or "driven with the wind and tossed." He knows himself to be a sinner, and Christ Jesus to be the Saviour of sinners; and he means to flee to that only hope and refuge. But still, in restless activity about "the things which are seen and temporal," and in idle indifference toward "the things which are not seen and are eternal," the language of his heart is, To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow.

Young friend, is it so with you? Ah! be not so unwise. Abandon, once for all, your criminal trifling. Hear the words which the Holy Spirit teaches: "*To-day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." Your "present duty" is "to lay hold on the hope set before you;" to believe in the Saviour of sinners; to close with the offers of God's mercy, to seek eternal life, and to seek it in God's

appointed way—through Jesus Christ, the Prince of life, the atoning sacrifice, the only Mediator between God and man. Yes, young reader, this is your duty, your *present* duty. Let this, then, be your first great concern.

Your present duty! Try to find out the worth of your soul, dear young friend; *that* is your present duty. Have you never tried your powers on this problem? Try them *now*, then—not to-morrow.

“Don’t tell us of to-morrow!

It must be done to-day:

’Twill never be accomplish’d

While you throw the hours away.”

Find out, then, the value of your soul, by the test which the Divine Saviour has taught us to apply: “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Your *present* duty, young friend, is to find an answer to these questions.

Your present duty! To value and make the most of your present advantages; that is your present duty. To “remember thy Creator in the days of thy *youth*, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;” this is your present duty.

To say, or think, when any difficulty seems

to arise to prevent you from doing what your conscience tells you, and the Bible tells you, ought to be done, and done at once, "There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets;" this is *not* your present duty. "It is only by meeting and overcoming difficulties that you can form a manly and strong"—and what is more, a Christian—"character." One victory over temptation paves the way for other and greater victories. One instance of cowardly yielding to temptation weakens the soul for future conflicts. Sloth, like all other evil habits, gathers strength by indulgence.

"There have been multitudes before you who set aside present duty by the help of this or that plausible reason, and at the same time dream of great activity in some indefinite future time. Vain dream! how vain, their dying hour revealed to them. If you imitate their folly, you will find out at last, to your sorrow, as they did, that the real hindrances to God's service you carry about with you in your own bosom, and that no change of circumstances can remove them. If, then, you would not live a life of sloth, and die a death of anguish and despair, awake at once to the performance of duty. God helps the earnest: the sluggard he leaves to want."

Yes, God *does* help the earnest. He says to you, young friends, "Ask, and it shall be

given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matt. vii. 7 8.



VIII.

CONCLUSION.

SCHOOLBOYS! our review of school days is ended; but our book—not quite.

A few years ago were gathered together the teachers and pupils, not of *our* school, but of one much larger. It was “the public day,” as it was called; and many beside teachers and pupils were there to witness its proceedings. There were prizes awarded, and other proceedings, (with which schoolboys are familiar,) preparatory to going home. Of these, however, we do not intend to give you any account. But beside these, an address was made to those who were that day assembled; and from that part of it which more particularly concerned the boys, we shall find and borrow a fitting conclusion to our tales. Here it is; and let every schoolboy in whose hands this book may be placed, read it attentively and prayerfully:—

“My dear boys: knowledge is good, large information is very desirable; but *religious* knowledge is absolutely necessary. Science, literature and elegant accomplishments, all that gives to the intellect greatness or refinement, if possessed apart from religious faith and holy char-

acter, are only as flowers that adorn the dead. There is a knowledge which purifies while it expands; which is life to the soul, as well as light to the intellect; which will go with you to any world, and prepare you for any, by guiding you safely through the dangers of this. Seek that knowledge where you know it is to be found—in those Holy Scriptures ‘which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.’ Cultivate, dear youth, piety toward God, deep reverence for his presence, his service and his name. Pray to him for that pardon of sin which boys need as well as men, and for that grace which children, as well as adults, can receive. The promise is to you as well as to us.

“In relation to your general conduct, I should like you to associate real nobility and greatness of character with what is moral—with habitual obedience to the law of conscience, and the dictates of duty. Vice is mean and degrading, as well as wrong. In the Bible, sinners are represented as objects of contempt as well as of condemnation. A bad boy knows well enough that he deserves to be despised, for he cannot help sometimes despising himself. Do, bravely and manfully, every thing that you feel you ought. Cultivate a generous, open, unsuspecting temper. Despise selfishness; hate and loath it in all its forms of vanity, sloth, self-will, oppression of the weak, harshness to the

timid, refusal of help which it would be proper to render, or of little sacrifices to serve others. Detest every thing like duplicity and deceit. Don't go within a mile of a lie! Value your honour, truthfulness and integrity. When you have misunderstandings, do not be ashamed of acknowledging error, or apologizing for wrong. As soon as possible, be rid of grudges and resentments, and live together in cheerfulness and love. Be, in manners, at once frank and courteous—in act and conversation, delicate and pure. In one word, desire in all things so to behave yourselves that as you 'grow in stature,' you may 'grow in wisdom and in favour with God and man.'

"One word in relation to your studies—**WORK.** Work well, hard, cheerfully. Don't wish to get through, or to get off easily, or to be indebted to any one for any thing whatever that you ought to know and to do yourselves. Every thing depends on your diligence and industry. Let none of you fancy that because you have genius you may dispense with labour. No boy ever translated Homer by inspiration. Nothing valuable is, in this world, either done or got without effort. 'Nature gives us something at first'—something to start with—our original capacity, whatever it may be. 'Every thing else, after this, she sells—sells always—sells to all—and sells dear. You must pay the price. By intellectual labour you may pur-

chase for yourselves attainments and distinction; happiness and respect come by virtue. If you like, you may be idle, thoughtless, wicked; the price is ignorance, contempt, ruin. Nothing will come to you in this way. Recollect, also, that in the long run there can be no mistake. No boy or man can ever really get what he has not purchased, or carry away what belongs to another: or, if he does so, or appears to do so, he cannot keep it for any long time without being detected. Every day is a day of judgment—a day of reaping as you have sown—of revelation of what you are. ‘No man is concealed,’ or can be. Not one of you can go through life, all the way, with the reputation and character of a good scholar, if you are not really such. Things will be constantly occurring to reveal you, and society will not be long in ascertaining your precise height and depth, your solid contents and superficial dimensions. In the same way, you cannot pass for what you are not in respect to your actual moral character; somehow or other, you will come to find yourself weighed and measured. You will pass among your fellows for what you are worth, and for nothing more; if you are worthless, the world will soon make the discovery, and it will *let you know* that it has made it. Depend upon it, the best way to be thought good is to *be* good; the surest mode of being held in reputation is to have a character.

“ If, at this moment, I could gather together here all the pupils that have ever been located within these walls ; if I could summon them from wheresoever they sojourn, and cause them to surround you in visible forms, and thus show you exactly what they are, it would be a most affecting and instructive spectacle. Many, probably, would have to rise from their graves ; of these, some would appear as spirits of light ; some, it is to be feared, with the awful aspect of lost souls. Others would be brought from the ends of the earth, and the isles of the sea ; from under ancient dynasties and new republics ; from continents and colonies of another hemisphere : of these some would be found to be honourably engaged in commercial enterprise ; some to have been driven from their fatherland by folly or misfortune ; some to have gone voluntarily forth as ministers and missionaries—the highest form and office of humanity. Of those that would come from the towns and cities of our country, how great would be the number ; how varied the pursuits ; how different in their tastes, habits, and character ; how changed in appearance—perhaps in opinions, sympathy, belief—from what they were, when in this school, as they plied their tasks, or bounded in the playground, or kneeled in prayer ! Many would be here, (there can be no doubt,) who have passed through life, and are passing through it, with honourable characters and spotless

reputation; many who are enjoying the fruits and rewards of steadiness and industry; and many beside, who, adding to their virtue *faith*, and following out their religious training, are known and esteemed as religious men, and adorn the community in which they move. Pleasant would it be to look upon the countenances of such men—men of intelligence, virtue, and religion; pleasant for you to hear their words of encouragement, and their united testimony to the advantages of learning—the worth of goodness—the possibility of securing, and the satisfaction flowing from, the friendship of God.

“While such as these might allure and attract you toward holiness and heaven, there would be some others whose career and appearance would operate upon you in another manner; whose ruined characters and blighted prospects, debilitated health, reckless habits, wretchedness and shame, would alarm and deter you from following their courses, and move your hearts by pity and terror. Some of these, perhaps, when at school, were gay and buoyant, loved by their associates, and worthy to be loved. They entered life with high hopes and bright prospects; they were the pride of their parents; every thing was done for them to secure and facilitate their advancement and success: with all this, they have come to be what I have described—a ruin and a wreck.

If such could speak, they would probably tell you that they fell from not having a fixed, settled, and serious aim in life; that they gave themselves up to the satisfactions of the moment, whatever they might be; passed thoughtlessly from pleasure to pleasure; cared for nothing but immediate enjoyment, having no idea of living for any great or honourable purpose. Thus, wasting their talents and squandering their time, they easily proceeded from folly to vice, till they found themselves utterly and irretrievably ruined.

“But instead of fancying what they might say, I will tell you what actually was said by a man of good abilities and finished education, who thus wasted life and saw his error when too late. ‘Let my example warn you of a fatal error into which I have fallen,’ said he to a friend at his bedside. ‘I have pursued amusements, instead of turning my ingenuity and talents to useful purposes. I am sensible that my mind was fit for greater things than any of which I am now or was ever supposed to be capable. I am able to speak fluently in public, and I have perceived that my manner of speaking has always increased the force of what I said: upon various important subjects I am not deficient in useful information; and if I had employed half the time and half the pains in cultivating serious knowledge which I have wasted in exerting my powers upon trifles,

instead of dissipating my fortune and tarnishing my character, I should have become a useful member of society, and an honour to my family. Remember my advice, young man. Pursue what is *useful to mankind*. You will satisfy them, and, what is better, you will satisfy yourself.'

"Such was the melancholy close of a sinful course. God forbid that any of the bright eyes that are now before me, glistening with the dew of their young life, and sparkling with the light of hope and joy, should come to be dimmed with regrets like these! Nay, God forbid that any of you, my dear boys, should neglect to learn the important lesson, that what formed the highest object of this dying man's ambition and desire, even if attained, however it might really 'satisfy' the world, ought *not* alone to 'satisfy yourselves.' The best that he wished he had lived for and aimed at, is short of the best that you should pursue. *God* is to be satisfied as well as 'mankind.' However the one may be content with virtue, the other requires piety and faith. •He demands character founded on religion—usefulness flowing from love to Himself. Your best doings will be imperfect; you will need mercy to pardon sin—the Holy Spirit to implant principles of heavenly strength—grace to renew and sanctify the heart—the atonement of Christ believed, trusted in, pleaded in prayer

as the source of hope and the ground of acceptance. 'Seek first the kingdom of God.' 'Study to show yourselves approved unto *him*.' 'Serve him with reverence and godly fear.' 'Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.' 'See that ye neglect not the great salvation.' 'Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.' Pursuing a course of holy action and religious usefulness, you will come to know the truth of the memorable words of one of our devout and illustrious ancestors:—'You have been accustomed,' said Philip Henry to a friend standing by his bedside, as he was about to die—'you have been accustomed to note the last words of dying men; these are mine: A LIFE SPENT IN THE SERVICE OF GOD IS THE HAPPIEST LIFE UPON EARTH.' "

